



EASTERN CATHOLIC LIFE

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READER TIMOTHY FARISS AND READER PAUL VARCHOLA WEST ORDAINED TO THE SUBDIACONATE

by Subdeacon Timothy Fariss



Newly-ordained Subdeacon Timothy Fariss (left)
and Subdeacon Paul Varchola West (right)

On Thursday, May 2, Reader Timothy Fariss and Reader Paul Varchola West, both seminarians for the Eparchy of Passaic currently pursuing their theological studies and priestly formation at Saints Cyril and Methodius Byzantine Catholic Seminary in Pittsburgh, were ordained to the Order of Subdeacon by Metropolitan William at Saint John the Baptist

Byzantine Catholic Cathedral in Munhall, PA. The ordination to the subdiaconate, like the ordination to the lectorate, takes place before the Divine Liturgy begins. After making an oath and the Profession of Faith and laying on of hands by Metropolitan William, Subdeacon Paul and Subdeacon Timothy were each vested in an orarion, the stole also worn by deacons,

except that a subdeacon wears his orarion crossed around his back and chest. Since one of the functions of a subdeacon is to wash the hands of the bishop at a Hierarchical Divine Liturgy, they washed the hands of Metropolitan William and he dried his hands, draping the towels over their heads. The new subdeacons then stood outside the Holy Place in front of the icons of

Our Lord and the Theotokos for the first part of the Divine Liturgy, waiting to be invited into the Holy Place.

Prior to the Great Entrance, they were presented with a pitcher to wash Metropolitan William's hands again. After the Great Entrance, priests from the sanctuary stepped out of the deacon doors and brought them into the sanctuary to begin

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+FATHER BASIL RAKACZKY, OSBM, FALLS ASLEEP IN THE LORD

by Father John Zeyack

On April 9, 2019, Father Basil Rakaczky, O.S.B.M., died in Mariapocs, Hungary. When I heard these words, my first reaction was I must go to his funeral to pray.

I first met Father Basil along with Father Joseph Erdei and Father Stephen Skinta at Our Lady of Mariapocs Monastery in Matawan, NJ. All three Fathers came to America from Hungary where, during the Communist regime, all religious orders were suppressed by the government. All were still seminarians and were expelled. They escaped Hungary at personal peril and made it to Rome where they finished their formation and studies and were ordained priests. Before they left Hungary, their bishop asked them to serve in America. When I met them, they had just purchased land with a house, and it became their monastery. The garage was turned into

a chapel and they began their monastic life here in America. With great joy, they invited all of our clergy to please come. They had a special charism of joy and hospitality and a spirit of zeal to serve. I was happy to welcome them to our eparchy and looked forward to serving our Church with them. I somehow knew I would be blessed by their faith and loyalty to the Church.

My relationship to the monastery and friendship with the Basilian Fathers grew when I was assigned to serve at Saint Thomas the Apostle Church in Rahway, NJ. The Basilian Fathers continued their tradition of inviting all the priests to Emmaus Days during Paschal time. For the Basilian Fathers, welcome and hospitality were always part of any visit. Father Basil was already serving in Saint Michael Parish in Perth Amboy, NJ, and I would often see him at events

at the monastery. He was always gracious, welcoming, and affirming to all of our priests. When our eparchy opened our eparchial catechetical office, Father Basil looked forward to any catechetical events or new programs and responded with support and implementation in his parish. When Bishop +Michael (Dudick) appointed me to serve in the formation of our Presbyteral Council and later on our diocesan program for younger clergy, Father Basil was a member of both steering committees. His wise advice, affirmation, and support was positive, and he was always made time to listen and respond with great enthusiasm.

His pastoral care and continued personal study and prayerful ministry were a blessing to all of us. He read the *L'Osservatore Romano* to keep a worldwide vision and papal vision for the Church. His care of the sick was awesome.

He visited the hospitals at least once a week and those at home regularly. Whenever I would go to his rectory, he would always stop everything, and any visitor became the center of all his attention and hospitality. His theological insight and continued learning were always deeply personal and prayerful. Seeking God and serving his people was his life and his faithfulness to prayer and spiritual life were his deepest concerns.

After the Communist Era, Father Basil was called to Hungary and made spiritual director at the Greek Catholic seminary in Nyiregháza. He taught religion at the high school and was director of the novitiate. On Christmas, 1991, he came to Uzhorod when we received back the Greek Catholic Cathedral of the Holy Cross, our Ruthenian Mother Church. I came from America also and we went together to visit Fa-

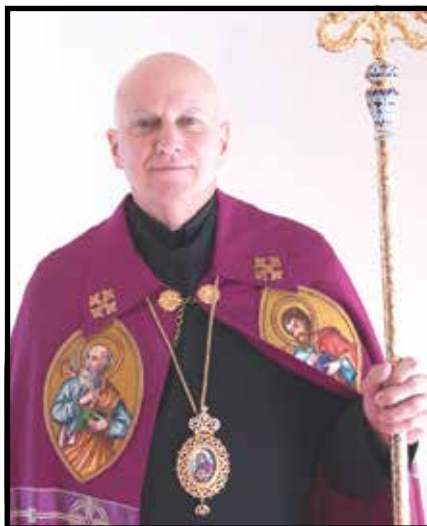
ther George Fedaka, who served underground to almost every church in Zakarpattia Oblast in Ukraine. I brought three sets of vestments for Father Fedaka and when he put them on, he danced for joy. It was the first time he ever had a full set of vestments. Father Basil cried for joy with tears when he saw this. Then, Father Basil returned to Saint Michael Parish in Perth Amboy. In October 2003, I left to serve in the seminary in Uzhorod. Whenever I returned home, I would always stay with Father Basil. It was a time to unwind and be renewed in spirit.

Father Basil was called again by his Order to return to Mariapocs. I saw him four times during this time. I always would go through Budapest so that I could spend a night or two at the monastery. Whenever I came, I always found Father Basil in the Shrine Church praying or confessing.



His time that he was well was for God. During my last visit when he was well, we talked about two hours – life, prayer, our life, and relation to the Holy Trinity. He was no longer able to spend all day in the church. He wasn't strong enough. But if someone called and asked him for confession, he was there to confess him. The last time I was there and saw him, he was in the nursing home. He remembered who I was but couldn't remember me fully. Before we left, we prayed with the Basilian Fathers who were with me the "Our Father" in Hungarian. Father Basil's last words were, "WHAT A BEAUTIFUL PRAYER."

*Legyen az örök emléke!
Blessed repose and
eternal memory!*



I LIFT UP MY EYES...

Pastoral Reflections of Bishop Kurt



YOUR YOUNG MEN WILL SEE VISIONS YOUR OLD MEN WILL DREAM DREAMS

In the beginning was the Word. And the Word was with God. And the Word was God." In our Church, we read through the whole New Testament except for the last book, the Apocalypse, every year. The antiquity of our Church is manifest in how we read the Bible. First of all, most of the New Testament was written to be read out loud in the early Church. It's easy to see in the letters of Saint Paul that they are addressed to congregations, not to individuals. Another ancient practice of the Church was to keep the Gospel of Saint John secret from outsiders. During the three centuries of persecution, there were certain parts of the Faith that were not shared with outsiders. Not until newcomers had extensive preparation, and vetting, and were baptized, were they introduced to these special parts of the Faith. Scholars call this the *disciplina arcana*. The Holy Eucharist itself was part of the *disciplina arcana*, and even the "Our Father." You can see that in our service because both the Holy Eucharist and the "Our

Father" are after the part where the deacon sings, "the doors, the doors..." The catechumens were escorted out of the church and the doors were locked.

There is various evidence for this practice of *disciplina arcana*, including clear evidence in our own Liturgy. One of the clearest is the lectures that Saint Cyril of Jerusalem gave on the sacraments at their Baptism just before Easter. He says to them, "You are wondering what happens behind those closed doors; you are about to find out." He goes on to explain to them the sacrament of Baptism, the sacrament of Chrismation, and the Holy Eucharist. In fact, Saint Cyril wrote 23 lectures for converts, the first eighteen we call catechetical lectures, which prepare people for Baptism, and the final five are for after Baptism, and we call them "Mystagogic" because he talks about the mysteries hidden from the uninitiated. Saint Cyril was a bishop who wrote most especially about the mercy and forgiveness of God, and the Divine gentleness. For example, in his lecture on the Holy Spirit he contrasts the spirit of sin with the Spirit of God. He says that the spirit of sin seizes what does not belong to it, and twists nature in anger. Sin forces itself on the unwilling. But

he says of the Holy Spirit, "His coming is gentle; the perception of Him is fragrant; His burden most light; beams of light and knowledge shine forth before His coming."

As I said, there are remnants of the *disciplina arcana* in our Liturgy, and one of those remnants is our choice of readings. The reason that we read the Gospel of Saint John after Easter is because it was considered "advanced" teaching and reserved for those who were already received into full communion of the Church at the Easter baptism. Every year, I love the readings after Easter. I love the long stories we read from the Gospel of Saint John, the paralytic healed by the pool, the healing of the man born blind, and Jesus's meeting with the blunt, outspoken, and remarkable Samaritan woman.

At the same time, we read through the entire Acts of the Apostles from beginning to end, our own early Church history. Beginning where the Gospel of Saint Luke ends, with the Ascension into heaven of our Lord, the disciples wait in Jerusalem for the promised Spirit, and in the form of fiery tongues, the Divine Wind rushes from heaven, breathing life into the newly formed Body of Christ, the Church. The Apostles come out of their locked quarters and begin talking to the astonished crowd who first heard the wind, and now hear these inhabitants of Palestine speaking to them in their native tongues although they were from various exotic lands. They asked each other, "how is it that these men from Galilee are telling us about the mighty works of God in our own language, though we are Parthians, Medes, and Elamites, and from Mesopotamia and Judea and Cappadocia and Pontus and Asia, Phrygia, Pamphylia, Egypt, Libya, Crete, and Arabia?" Some accused the speakers of being drunk. Perhaps those with hardened hearts were unable to understand anything they heard. Saint Peter addresses the crowd and tells them that they have just witnessed the fulfillment of the prophecy of Joel, a prophecy about the great and awesome Day of the Lord for which the chosen people had been waiting for half a millennium or longer.

Centuries before Christ, the prophet Joel, whose name means "Ya is God," wrote, "In those days, I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh. Your sons and your daughters will prophesy. Your young men will see visions, and your old men will dream dreams. Even on your man-

servants and your maid servants I will pour out my Spirit. And in those days, there will be signs in the heavens and on the earth, blood, fire, columns of smoke, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will turn to blood, before the great and awesome Day of the Lord. And in those days, all who call on the name of the Lord will be saved." Saint Peter quotes the prophecy thus far, and I think he went as far as that last verse for a reason. When he says, "All who call on the name of the Lord will be saved," he is saying that God will open up salvation to all the world, not just to the chosen people. As we see later in the Acts, even Saint Peter does not realize the significance of what he is saying until much later when he witnesses the conversion of Cornelius the Roman soldier and tells the rest of the disciples that God intends the Gospel for everyone.

The Gospel of Saint John was written much later than the other three and contains very different material. In case it isn't obvious when we read it, the early Christians commented that Saint John knew the other Gospels and was supplying his own account that includes things that he considered missing from the other three as well as fleshing out some things that were in the first three Gospels. By this time, perhaps sixty years after Pentecost and the birth of the Church, and sixty years after the Ascension, Saint John had a clearer idea of what Jesus intended for his Church, and what Jesus meant when he said at the Ascension, "I am with you always to the end of the age." With this in mind, Saint John gives the fullest exposition of some of the Sacraments, or as we call them, Mysteries. The entire third chapter of Saint John is about the Mystery of Baptism. After telling Nicodemus that he must be born again in water and the spirit, it says later in the chapter that Jesus and his disciples went into Judea baptizing. Then in the sixth chapter, Jesus tells us, "Unless you eat My flesh and drink My blood, you have no life in you." By the way, those words are the reason that we give Holy Communion to newly baptized infants in our tradition. When Jesus said these words, He knew that it would be a scandal, so He prepared His followers with some of His most spectacular signs, feeding the crowd, walking on water, and calming the storm. (Have you ever thought about the fact that when Jesus shows His power over the weather, He calms a storm—He doesn't start a storm.) As I said, He knew His words would be a scandal or stumbling block, and indeed

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As this issue went to press, Subdeacon Paul Varchola West was ordained to the diaconate by Bishop Kurt at Saint Michael the Archangel Cathedral in Passaic, NJ.
Article and photos to appear in the July issue.

many of His followers left Him when He said, “My flesh is real food, and My blood is real drink.” In our own civilization about five hundred years ago, many European Christians made the same mistake. They said, “this teaching is too hard for us”, and they left the Catholic Church starting the many Protestant churches. Then, at the Feast of Tabernacles, in chapters 7 and 8, Jesus cries out in the temple, “Let anyone who is thirsty come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, ‘Out of his heart shall flow rivers of living water.’” Saint John explains that Jesus is talking about the Holy Spirit, but no one understood Him because the Spirit had not yet come.

And finally, tying together all these sacramental teachings, we read in the Gospel of Saint John after the Resurrection about the institution of Holy Orders. Saint John says that after the Resurrection, Jesus breathed on the disciples and said, “Receive the Holy Spirit. Whose sins you shall forgive they are forgiven them. Whose sins you shall retain, they are retained.” Although this is not the only passage about the institution of this great sacrament, it is an important one. When Jesus was walking on earth two thousand years ago, He used many physical tools for healing and for His presence. We know that He touched people, He used mud and His own spit, and He used His audible speech, and even His clothing was an instrument of healing. At the Ascension, He said, “I am with you always to the end of the age.” He continues His healing ministry of grace today using physical things. We baptize with water at His command. We receive His true Body and Blood in the appearance of bread and wine. We anoint with oil to heal the sick and absolve their sins, as described by the Apostle James in his Epistle. And these sacraments are bound together by the great mystery of Holy Orders, by which we pass on through the generations Christ’s authority to forgive sins, the power to

bind and loose. The sacrament of Holy Orders is married intimately to the sacrament of the Holy Eucharist and is remarkably similar to it, for in the one, the true Flesh and Blood of Jesus Christ is hidden under the appearance of ordinary bread and wine, and in the other the merciful and forgiving priesthood of Jesus Christ, according to the order of Melchizedek, is hidden under the sinful and disordered flesh of the ordained priest.

In addition to his clear exposition of the sacramental system, Saint John clarifies for us Christ’s plan for Church unity. Remember, Saint Paul says forcefully, “there is one Body and one Spirit...one Faith, one Lord, one Baptism, and one Father”! Saint Paul says that the Church is the Body of Christ. Saint Paul pleads in so many passages for Church unity that I always find it remarkable when people quote Saint Paul to justify splitting the Church! But does Jesus have a plan for us to preserve Church unity? Remember that by the time that Saint John is writing his Gospel, it has been sixty years since the Ascension and sixty years since Pentecost, and other important Apostles have been martyred. Saint John was living in a time when people were questioning the apostolic teachings and their authority. In addition to clarifying Christ’s presence in the holy Mysteries, Saint John concludes his Gospel with a decisive passage about the role of his friend, Saint Peter. Three times, Jesus asks Peter if he loves Him, and three times, Jesus tells Peter to feed His sheep. We know from Saint Mark’s Gospel that Saint Peter made no secret about his terrible sin of denial at the Crucifixion and his bitter repentance. No doubt it was an important part of Saint Peter’s eyewitness account of the life of Jesus. Thirty years after his death, the enemies of apostolic authority would have been using Saint Peter’s sin to cast doubt on his special role. I can’t see any other reason for Saint John to include this relatively lengthy passage after the Resurrection, except to establish not only the exemplary repentance but also the special role of Saint Peter as a shepherd. In the very same Gospel, Jesus calls Himself the “Good Shepherd,” a reference to the great shepherd David, but then Jesus says to Saint Peter three times, “Feed my sheep.”

As we read through the Acts of the Apostles, we see further references, written decades earlier, to these same Mysteries. In the very first chapter of the Acts, even before the coming of the Holy Spirit, the Apostles remaining after the death of Judas chose from among the other disciples a successor named Matthias to take his place “in ministry and in apostleship.” [As an aside, it is

a custom among western bishops to wear an amethyst ring because in the middle ages there was an assignment of gemstones to each apostle. The gemstone for Matthias was an amethyst, so all the successors to the apostles wear amethyst. In the Old Testament, the high priest wore a breastplate with twelve gemstones for the twelve tribes of Israel. In the Book of the Apocalypse, the New Jerusalem has a foundation of twelve gemstones for the twelve apostles. Although the Apocalypse lists the twelve stones, it does not say which one goes with which Apostle. Later on, Christians made an assignment and a popular version is Saint Peter—jasper or bloodstone, Saint Andrew—sapphire, Saint James—chalcedony, Saint John—emerald, Saint Philip—sardonyx, Saint Bartholomew—sard, Saint Matthew—chrysolite, Saint Thomas—beryl, Saint James—topaz, Saint Jude—chrysoprase, Saint Simon—hyacinth, Saint Matthias—amethyst.]

Later in the Acts of the Apostles, we read that the Apostles instituted the order of deacons to assist them in their ministry. The Apostles did not want the day-to-day problems of the community to interfere with their time for praying and studying, so they asked the people to choose seven of their own for this work. Then it says that the Apostles prayed over them and laid hands on them. To this day, all of the churches in the world that go back to the Apostles recognize the same three orders in the Mystery of Holy Orders, namely bishop, presbyter, and deacon. Already in the time of Saint John, Saint Ignatius was writing clearly and repetitively about these three orders.

Then, further on in the Acts, we can read another remarkable confirmation of our present-day belief. One of the first deacons, Philip, goes into Samaria to preach the Gospel. By the blessing of God, many people accept his teaching and are baptized. However, the scriptures go on to tell us that, in order for them to receive the Holy Spirit, the Church sent them two apostles, Saint Peter and Saint John. “They sent to them Peter and John, who came down and prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit; for the Spirit had not yet fallen on any of them, but they had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then they laid their hands on them and they received the Holy Spirit.” Two thousand years later, we have this same system. Anyone can baptize, but only a bishop can call down the Holy Spirit. That is why in the West, a bishop gives the sacrament of Confirmation. It appears at first that we have a different tradition in the East because our presbyters give the mystery of Chrismation. But actually, a presby-

ter cannot give the mystery of Chrismation, no matter how much he prays and fasts, unless he is given Chrism blessed by a bishop.

It is very important to understand that the Catholic Church does not claim to control the Holy Spirit and has never taught such a thing. When the clergy in communion with the Church call down the Holy Spirit, we have the assurance of our ancient faith that God keeps His promise. We know the Holy Spirit is present. But of course, God is free to send the Holy Spirit whenever it pleases the Divine will. As the Scriptures say, “The Spirit blows where it will.” And, in the Acts of the Apostles, we read further on that when Saint Peter visits the Roman centurion, Cornelius, God sends the Holy Spirit down on Cornelius without the action of Saint Peter, and when Saint Peter witnesses the descent of the Spirit on Cornelius, he then makes the decision to offer baptism to this gentile. When the Church in Jerusalem hears about the events, Saint Peter is called back to explain things, and the Church realizes that God has opened up salvation to everyone, not just to the chosen people of Israel. This rather lengthy story seems to be very important to Saint Luke because he repeats the speeches so many times and with such detail. I can see why! The same passage is important to me, too. Like Cornelius, I am not one of the chosen people of Israel, so this passage tells me that I, too, am included in God’s plan of salvation. When God said that all peoples would find blessing in Abraham, I am included, too, even though I am not a descendant of father Abraham.

What a time of blessing is the time of Pentecost—the fifty days of the Resurrection. It is as though we are among those first Christians 2,000 years ago, singing incessantly that Christ is Risen. And as we read through the Gospel of Saint John and the Acts of the Apostles, we relive the excitement of those early saints, as they gradually comprehended the ancient prophecies about the Messiah, as they studied the scriptures and discovered how the prophecies were fulfilled in unexpected ways by the life of Christ, as they saw the growth of Body of Christ, and as they understood what Jesus meant when he said, “take up your cross and follow me”. Just as they saw Jesus glorified in His passion and death, they witnessed the martyrdom of early Christians and earnestly desired the same Christlike death for themselves. And just as they witnessed the Resurrection of the Messiah, the Son of David, they looked forward to their own resurrections after their own imitation of the passion of the Christ.

+Kurt Brunette

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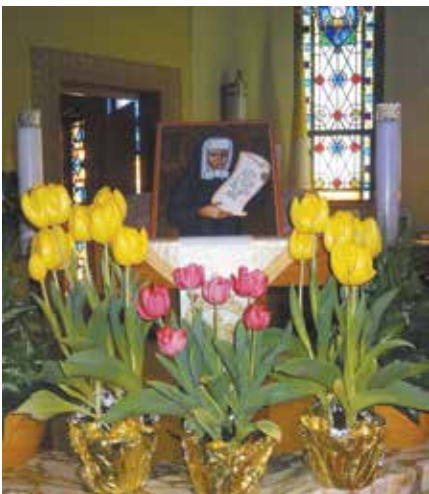
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PEOPLE YOU KNOW AROUND THE EPARCHY

IN BAYONNE...

Father Gregory Lozinskyy celebrated his first Liturgy as Administrator of Saint John the Baptist Byzantine Catholic Church in Bayonne, NJ. This was a special occasion, because it was not only Father Gregory's first Liturgy at Saint John the Baptist Parish, but also it was on Blessed Miriam Teresa's feast day. Sister Mary Canavan, SC, and Sister Rosemary Smith, SC, attended the Liturgy and social. The picture of Blessed Miriam Teresa's icon surrounded by tulips was taken on Pascha, but they lasted until her feast day.



IN CARY...

Saints Cyril and Methodius Parish Honors Mothers

A mild spring day greeted parishioners of Saints Cyril and Methodius in Cary, NC, on May 12. After Divine Liturgy, children in their Sunday best scampered around the playground while their parents chatted. The scent of flowers mixed with the appetizing aroma of pork shoulders roasting on the grill. The men of the parish had organized a Mother's Day feast and worked through the night preparing the main dish. Father Mark Shuey, Administrator of the parish, blessed the pulled pork, coleslaw, baked beans, corn salad, mac and cheese, and many desserts and fruit. This was a wonderful way to honor mothers—a community sharing a Eucharistic feast followed by a delicious meal, food for the whole person!



IN RAHWAY...

"Whoever is kind to the needy honors God" (Proverbs 14:31)

Lent is a time to pray, fast, and give alms. The parishioners of Saint Thomas the Apostle Church came together as a community, along with our neighbors at Saint George Parish in Linden, to pray and give alms on a larger scale. The knitters and crocheters made beautiful "prayer squares"—(or "pocket protectors," as they were affectionately dubbed) Each square had a prayer attached to it. On March 3, at Forgiveness Sunday Vespers, parishioners picked the name of a fellow parishioner to pray for during Lent. Parishioners also took squares to give to others who may have been in need of prayer. How wonderful a gift it was to give a



square to a coworker, neighbor, or even someone you encountered throughout the day, letting them know that they were being prayed for by you.

The almsgiving included "The Great Fast Challenge." Parishioners were asked to find an item – a small household item, clothing, or non-perishable food – and place it in a bag on each day of Lent. Items were delivered to Catholic Charities and the food pantry at Divine Mercy Parish in Rahway. The spirit of generosity was alive and well as many filled more than one bag. Parishioners were able to donate 427 pounds of food and fill 41 bags/boxes of items! With God's grace, the joyful feeling of giving of one's self will continue well after the Pascha season and to continually make a difference in the lives of others. Archpriest James Hayer serves Saint Thomas Parish. Father Vitaliy Pukhayev serves Saint George Parish.



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:

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READER TIMOTHY FARISS AND
READER PAUL VARCHOLA WEST
ORDAINED TO THE SUBDIACONATE

by Subdeacon Timothy Fariss

Continued from page 1

their ministry as subdeacons. Traditionally, the subdeacon was the lowest ordained server allowed in the sanctuary, hence why the readers did not enter the sanctuary. Some documents state that there were upwards of 60 subdeacons and 160

ordained readers serving in Hagia Sophia in Constantinople prior to the 1200's. Subdeacons, while serving in the sanctuary, might also step into the nave to bring order to the masses which numbered in the thousands and tens of thousands, in

a similar way as ushers might with a large crowd. In the early Church, subdeacons were responsible for making sure no catechumen remained in the church at the creed. This is why the deacon may exclaim before the creed at the Divine Liturgy, "The doors, the doors." This was an instruction to the subdeacons to bar the doors to make sure no uninitiated person remained inside the church. In the absence of a permanent subdiaconate, altar servers now fill the role of the subdeacon.

As Subdeacon Timothy and Subdeacon Paul continue to grow in the spiritual life while preparing for ordination to the diaconate and presbyterate, they would like to express their gratitude to Almighty God for the blessings they have received and to their families, friends, fellow parishioners, seminary staff, as well as all of the readers of the ECL, for their prayers and support. They would also like to thank Bishop Kurt and the eparchial vocations director, Father Michael Kerestes, for their paternal care and support. **ECL**



The newly-ordained Subdeacon Paul Varchola West, with his wife, Alissa, and children



Metropolitan William places a towel over the newly-ordained Subdeacon Timothy Fariss



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PRESBYTERAL DAYS 2019

by Father Tyler Strand

The clergy of the Eparchy of Pas-saic once again met for the annual Presbyteral Days from Monday, April 29, until Thursday, May 2, at The Breakers Hotel in Spring Lake, NJ. The agenda was shared at Monday evening’s first session when most of the house-keeping and business was taken care of.

A variety of subjects were presented, from Conflict Management, presented by Deacon Tom Shubeck of Saint Thomas Parish, Rahway, NJ, to a report from Captain Father Erech Ochalek of Archdiocese for the Military, on Catholic chaplaincy ministry to the armed forces. Next was a presentation on Fire Prevention by Mr. Paul Lesser, PA State Fire Instructor, and Mr. Jim Florshack, PA Fire Instructor and Assistant Fire Chief of the Scranton, PA, Fire Department, which included the potential fire dangers in parishes, including use of storage areas, mechanical and electrical rooms, and the hazards inherent with candles burning unattended. The presentation featured a demonstration of

the use of fire extinguishers; our priests were nearly all able to hit a hotel sign from ten feet!

Wednesday featured “End of Life Issues” with Dr. Justin Anderson, who teaches moral theology at Seton Hall University, leading discussion of the controversies surrounding the subtle incursion of euthanasia in medical care and concern about some questionable hospice treatment. This was followed by Father Michael Salnick’s presentation on cemetery issues in which he shared, among other things, new methods used by funeral directors, and the effects on the performance of the Church ministry of Christian Burial.

Father Vasyl Chepelskyy, as part of his report on Eastern Christian education, presented a mock-up of a new book eventually to be made available to parishes describing and illustrating unique aspects of the Byzantine Catholic Church which visitors and other interested parties might wish to know



about. He also presented a new look for the eparchial website, which should go online in the near future.

A significant discussion followed on “Maintaining Spirituality in the Time of Scandal,” led by Father John Chadwick, Rector of Saint Andrew Seminary, in which the priests considered the profound challenges facing our clergy in the wake of the abuse scandal. Committee meetings on liturgy, evangelization and vocations filled in some of the breaks, but ample time was given

for informal social sharing, always an important part of these gatherings.

Thursday morning, the final day of the gathering, Bishop Kurt delivered an address in which he once again encouraged the clergy to preach on the Sunday epistle readings, and summarized all that had been presented over the previous three days.

The clergy will meet in the autumn for their annual retreat.



CANTOR INSTITUTE OFFERS ONLINE CLASSES, SUMMER SCHOOL

The Byzantine Catholic Church has a unique place among the Catholic and Orthodox churches in the United States: it is the only place where all liturgical services are routinely sung, from beginning to end, by the entire congregation. To do this, the church needs **cantors**: men and women who know our liturgy and plain chant and can begin the singing of the faithful and guide it as each service progresses.

Online classes

The range of skills needed by a cantor is broad. Based on the experience of fifteen years teaching cantors in the classroom, in 2015 the Metropolitan Cantor Institute in Pittsburgh launched an Internet-based program to teach the liturgical and musical knowledge that a cantor needs. These classes can be accessed at <http://mci.archpitt.org/classes>.

The initial classes in the program are FREE, and can be taken at any time:

Introduction to Liturgy

Introduction to Church Singing

Introduction the Typikon

Each class consists of guided lessons, listening assignments, and easy quizzes and reviews. In the church singing course, students record the chants they have learned, at home, and instructors help each student improve his or her singing. Classes can be taken on any

internet-connected computer, tablet, or smartphone, and are open to ALL members of the Byzantine Catholic Church. (Because the Church Singing course involves significant instructor time for feedback, there is a registration fee for non-members.)

Further courses cover reading in church, the Divine Liturgy and Vespers, and singing in the Eight Tones, as well as special services throughout the church year. They also include material on leadership skills for cantors, as well as integrating the liturgy and church singing into one's own prayer life. The entire program can be completed in two years, for less than \$35/month per student.

Summer School

Of course, some things can only be learned and practiced through actual singing in church! So, the Cantor Institute also provides an annual summer school and occasional regional classes.

This year, the Summer Cantor School will be held on July 18-19 at Saint Mary Byzantine Catholic Church in Hillsborough, NJ. It is open to both new and experienced cantors and is being offered on a Thursday and Friday to allow serving cantors to return to their home parishes for weekend services. We also hope that older teens and young adults will consider attending as well, to investigate a potential vocation as cantor.

Note that NEW or prospective cantors should take the free online class, Introduction to Church Singing, BEFORE attending the summer school. For details, see the MCI website!

Hymnal Project

Renewing our parish singing has to focus on the music of the liturgical services – but our church also has a strong tradition of singing so-called “paraliturgical hymns” and spiritual songs outside of the Liturgy, especially in honor of the Mother of God and the saints. At the request of the Inter-Eparchial Music Commission, the Metropolitan Cantor Institute is currently preparing a new and expanded hymnal for our church. All discussion for this project is conducted online, and cantors and others are warmly encouraged to participate.

Future projects being planned include a basic set of harmonized plain chant, a “core repertoire” in Church Slavonic for parishes which still sing occasionally in this language, and materials to teach the skill of singing plain chant in harmony “by ear,” as has been done in our church for many years. We are also looking for opportunities to give more regional classes, and to help parishes document and celebrate their own local history of church singing.

For more information, check out the Metropolitan Cantor Institute website, <http://mci.archpitt.org>. You can also contact the MCI director, Deacon Jeffrey Mierzejewski, at (412) 735-1676 or mci@archpitt.org

The Saint Nicholas Pilgrimage

Carpathian Village
Cresco, PA

August 4, 2019



Summer School for Cantors

*Two-day workshop for cantors
in the Eparchy of Passaic*

When: July 18-19, 2019

**Where: Saint Mary
Byzantine
Catholic Church
1900 Brooks Blvd.
Hillsborough, NJ**

**Who: Cantors of the
Eparchy of Passaic
New and experienced
cantors of any age
welcome**

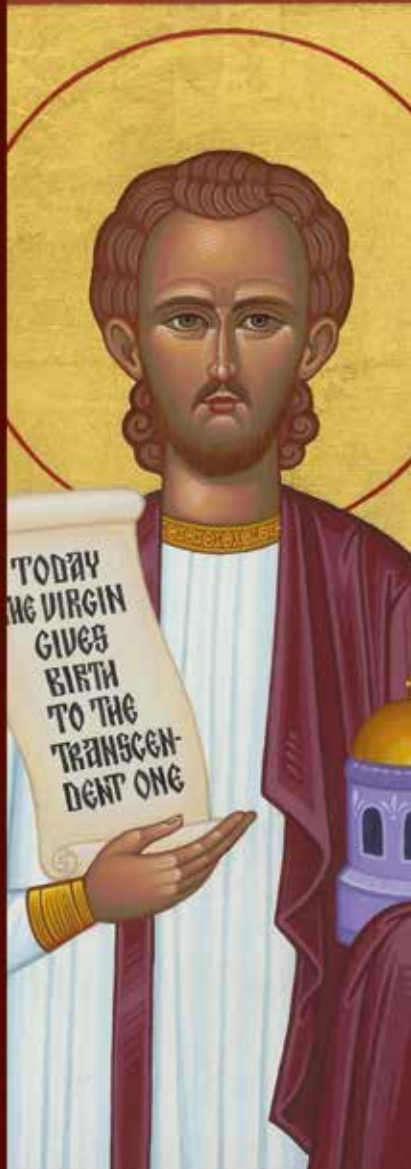
Cost: \$100

TOPICS WILL INCLUDE:

- The cantor's role
- Confidence: The first three notes
- Pitch choice and matching
- Parish feast days

- Funeral service and parastas
- Baptismal and wedding services
- The “spirit” of plain chant
- And more!

*For more information or to register:
Contact Deacon Jeffrey Mierzejewski -
mci@archpitt.org or (412) 735-1676.*



CHURCH SLAVONIC DIVINE LITURGY

With Homily Ponašemu

Saint Mary Byzantine Catholic Church at 8:30 AM
(Saint Mary's Ruthenian Greek Catholic Church, Inc.)

246 East 15th Street, New York, New York 10003

Telephone: 212-677-0516

Email: Fredcimbala@gmail.com

Father Edward G. Cimbala, D.Min.—Pastor

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



Visiting New York City? Come Worship With Us!

Saint Mary Byzantine Catholic Church
Father Edward G. Cimbala, D.Min.—Pastor

246 East 15th Street, Manhattan, New York
212-677-0516

Sunday Divine Liturgy

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



LIFE, LOVE, AND THE HUMAN PERSON

By Ann M. Koshute, MTS

GETTING LIT

When I was a kid, I loved hearing my mom's stories of her childhood growing up Catholic in a small Pennsylvania German town. One of her most compelling stories revolved around a few days every summer when a small caravan pulled into town, pitched a large tent, and drew crowds each evening. It wasn't a *circus* or carnival. As my mom told it, "The Holy Rollers" were in town, and they did constitute a kind of circus compared to the solemnity of Sunday High Mass at her Roman Catholic parish, which followed precise rubrics with no room for surprises. All of the Catholic kids in town were fascinated by the "revival" and those who attended it. It was loud and raucous (at least it seemed so compared to the Mass), and it was most certainly forbidden for any Catholic to even peek their head inside the tent to see what was going on. My mom never did, though the temptation to see how these holy ones "rolled" was overwhelming. It's hard to say how many impressionable – or wayward – Catholics were swept up by the Spirit and convinced by these tent revivals to actually leave the Church for something more emotionally satisfying. But my mom wasn't the only person in town fascinated by it, and as an adult more secure in my faith (though still with a way to go on my pilgrimage), I understand that appeal and see its usefulness in reflecting on my relationship with God, and especially with the Holy Spirit.

Generally speaking, Byzantine Catholics aren't known for being *consumed by the fire* of the Spirit or experiencing overt displays of charismatic zeal in our worship or personal prayer time. The Charismatic Renewal in the Roman Church rekindled interest in the spiritual gifts of the Holy Spirit (see Saint Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians), and in the more public manifestations of them. We know from the Creed that the Holy Spirit is the "Lord and giver of life," but He's also a prolific Giver of gifts, like temperance, fortitude, understanding, and more. He sometimes gives special gifts, or *charisms*, to people chosen to carry out a specific kind of work or mission. In First Corinthians, Saint Paul names these *charisms* (12:4-11): wisdom, knowledge, faith, healing, prophecy, discernment of spirits, speaking in tongues (a particular "language of the Spirit") and the ability to interpret them. Some of these gifts are clearly out of the ordinary (though I personally know some holy women who possess gifts of prophecy, discernment and tongues) and they may seem strange to us. I'm not sure exactly what went on in that tent when my mom saw the "Holy Rollers" come to town, but it's not outside the realm of possibility that the Holy Spirit came to dwell among the people present, and perhaps made manifest some of His gifts in them.

Many Catholics (Eastern and Western) look at anything "charismatic" as strange, and perhaps fraudulent. Still fewer have read Paul's Letter and know that such gifts are not only *real* but *necessary* for the Church to fulfil Her mission to bring about the Kingdom of God on earth. The Holy Spirit didn't just make a few key appearances in Scripture and then disappear. He is not an "afterthought" in the Creed, in the life of the Trinity, or in our lives. Yet it's easy to forget or take Him for granted. The Holy Spirit is the *breath* that gives life to the Church and enables us to live our Faith in the world each day with purpose and intention. It's not necessary to join a tent revival or pray with someone who has the gift of tongues, but it *is* essential that we get invited the Holy Spirit into our hearts and pray that He will enliven us to be authentically Christian in our love, service, sacrifice and gratitude. Though it didn't involve a tent or fiery preaching, a kind of revival took place in us when we received the Mysteries of Initiation. Most of us received them as babies and couldn't yet comprehend their meaning and importance. Sadly, many of the adults witnessing the ritual likely didn't fully engage in what was happening, being swept up more in taking pictures than in reflecting on the full weight of the event taking place. More spectacular than any tent *revival* or conversion through an "altar call," the descent of the Holy Spirit on each of us at our Chrismation was a powerful event, a kind of "personal Pentecost" that changed us forever.

The Apostles saw with their own eyes that *their* Jesus had been killed, sealed in a tomb for three days, then rose from the dead. They spoke to Him, ate with Him, continued to learn from Him and watched Him ascend to Heaven.

Jesus promised to remain with them and send the Holy Spirit to strengthen and empower them. Yet the Apostles remained hidden and fearful, not understanding what would happen now that Jesus was "gone." On Pentecost, the Holy Spirit descended upon the Apostles and lit a fire in them. They understood and accepted their mission to proclaim the Gospel, and kept the fire burning through prayer, praise and purposefully making space in their hearts for the Spirit to dwell. On "our Pentecost," when we were chrismated, the Holy Spirit lit a fire *in us*, even if we were too small to understand or act on it. We were anointed not in a purely symbolic way, but concretely with the *seal of the Holy Spirit*. The fire lit in our little hearts was only the beginning. In Chrismation we were given the grace and ability to carry out our mission: to seek God, to love Him with all of our hearts, and to introduce Him to everyone we meet.

We don't have to become "holy rollers," or manufacture emotional displays to prove we "have the Spirit." But as *Byzantine Catholics* we must embrace the gift of the Spirit we've been given, whether it was recently as adults, or long ago as babies. The fire that was enkindled in our hearts is real! It's up to us to fan the flame, to pray for the gifts that the Holy Spirit wants to give each of us and use them to invite others to know Him. We should be mindful of Him on Pentecost but realize He's in our midst at every Divine Liturgy, and whenever we receive one of the Holy Mysteries. It's up to us to look in our hearts to see if the flame burns brightly; and if it's running low, it's time for a revival. **ECL**

Pilgrimage to

ROMANIA & BULGARIA

with
Fr. Ed Cimbala and
Fr. James Spera

12 Days
October 14-25, 2019

For More Information Contact:
Fr. Ed Cimbala fredcimbala@gmail.com 908-872-2928
Select International Tours
800-842-4842, kristine@select-intl.com
www.selectinternationaltours.com

SELECT International
We share your faith

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

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

June: 1, 8, 15, 22, 29

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



SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES

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

REHABILITATING A FAILED APOSTLE: SAINT PETER

“Shalom.” “Peace.” That’s how Jews have greeted each other for ages. The Gospels never report Jesus using that greeting during His three-year ministry. The first time Jesus says “Peace” as a greeting is when He appeared to His Apostles in the Upper Room on the evening of His Resurrection (Luke 24:36; John 20:19.21).

There is a good reason why the very first word those eleven Apostles needed to hear from Jesus’ lips was “Peace.” They could not have been feeling particularly peaceful about Jesus. They had abandoned Him. Peter had denied Him three times. It all happened just as Jesus had predicted and just as they had sworn it would never happen. They were failures.

The whole point of Jesus’ sacrifice on the Cross was to make peace: to reconcile all of sinful humanity to God (Ephesians 2:14; Colossians 1:20). The Apostles were the first to hear that consoling message of peace and forgiveness because it was about to become their job to proclaim it to the rest of the world (Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:46-47; John 20:21). Saint Mark (16:14) is the only evangelist who reports that Jesus scolded the

Apostles in this first encounter after the Resurrection. Saint John, however, describes how Jesus specifically reconciled with Saint Peter and prepared him for his unique role among the Apostles.

Recall that, during the Last Supper, Jesus had predicted Peter’s triple denial “before the cock crows” (Matthew 26:34-35, 74-75; Mark 14:30; Luke 22:34,60-62; John 13:38). Peter, of course, objected vigorously and even promised to die along with Jesus (or for Him; Matthew 26:35; Mark 14:31; Luke 22:33; John 13:37-38).

Peter did, of course, deny Jesus three times when confronted by various people outside the High Priest’s house while Jesus was being interrogated (Matthew 26:69-75; Mark 14:66-72; Luke 22:54-62; John 18:15-18.25-27). Three evangelists report Peter’s tears when the cock crowed (Matthew 26:75; Mark 14:72; Luke 22:66) but only Saint John tells us that the whole scene took place beside a *charcoal* fire (John 18:18).

Fast forward to some unspecified time after Jesus’ resurrection. Seven of the apostles had returned to their “normal” lives as fishermen in Galilee and,

as usual when Jesus was not with them, they caught nothing. From the shore, a stranger advised them to cast the nets again. Miraculously, they caught a huge haul of fish (John 21:1-6). This scene practically reproduces what had happened in Luke 5:1-11, when Jesus had called Peter and his companions to be His disciples for the first time. John, the “disciple Jesus loved” (John 21:7), was the first to recognize the Lord but it is Peter who threw on some clothes (he had been working stripped; John 21:7), dove into the water, and swam toward Jesus.

Once ashore, the disciples found breakfast cooking on a charcoal fire (John 21:9). Jesus handled bread much as He had at the Last Supper (John 21:13). There, in the early morning, at that charcoal fire, at a meal, Jesus asked Peter three times: “Do you love me?” (John 21:15.16.17) and Peter’s response became more emotional each time. The triple question matches Peter’s triple denial. Peter’s stripped state suggests his disgrace; his rapid clothing marks the beginning of his rehabilitation. The questioning happens in a Eucharistic-like setting that recalls the Mystical Supper where all had been predicted.

Jesus’ initial question was: “Do you love me more than these?” (John 21:15). Was Jesus pointing at the other disciples or at the boats and the nets? In the original Greek, either is possible. Was Jesus asking Peter, once and for all, to choose between being a fisherman or being an apostle? Or was He inviting Peter to the role of primacy that Peter would play in the original Church (Matthew 16:18)? A conversation at the Last Supper points to the latter: Jesus said to Peter, “when you have returned to Me, strengthen your brethren” (Luke 22:32), foreseeing both Peter’s failure and his leadership.

How would Peter show his love for Jesus? First of all, by “feeding” the Lord’s “sheep” (John 21:15.16.17 with some alteration in the wording). Peter is called to imitate the Good Shepherd (John 10:1-16), not only in tending the flock but also in laying down his life for them. Jesus went on to predict Peter’s imprisonment and martyrdom (John 21:18-19). The Lord thus invited Peter to make good on his promise to die for Him (John 13:37-38). All this, Jesus sums up in a single command: “Follow me” (John 21:19).

For more than thirty years, Peter followed the Lord, preaching the Gospel from Jerusalem to Antioch to Rome, where he even mirrored Christ’s own sacrifice. Peter was crucified (upside down, according to tradition) by the Emperor Nero in 64 AD. **ECL**

Deployment, especially at the beginning, feels like that game we played on a school bus trip, when we sang, “a hundred bottles of beer on the wall, a hundred bottles of beer...” except on deployment, we start with a million bottles of beer. Sometimes the longing to be home and the monotony, the hopelessness, and helplessness of war make even chaplains say, “what the heck am I doing here.” I’ve had that feeling many times. I have been at this for over 18 years, since day one of this war, on 9/11/2001. These battles, these contingencies, remembering when I stood in front of building #7 of the World Trade Centers before, during, and after the collapse, and in front of the North Tower, seconds after it collapsed. “What the heck, am I still doing here?” Moreover, my thoughts are not unique.

All those feelings go away, even the melancholy of being away from family, friends, parishioners, a clean altar, and home-cooked meals—when some sad young soldier comes into the chapel or walks up to you on the running track and says, “Father, can I speak with you?” or “Father, do you have a minute?” Then it hits you like a ton of bricks when you watch a kid in the hospital ward who has been wounded for the fifth time, and not only has five Purple Heart Medals, but also four Bronze Stars, and a Silver Star. The same kid lost eighteen percent of his pulmonary function because the last round that hit him was an incendiary bullet that went through his lung and nicked his

heart. That same kid, well not really a kid anymore, is all of twenty-four years old, and is fighting to get back to his unit, because he is their platoon sergeant and says, “My men need me!” Not a thought about his own safety, not a thought about his own pain: his one thought is for the lives of his brothers. This is the icon of a Christian; this is a child of the living God.

Paul Claudel wrote, “youth is not made for pleasure, but for courage.” There are other kids, young men and women, and some not so young, giving up the first part of their youth, the middle, or the last years of their youth. Some stories, not so dramatic, are just as heart-wrenching. The young G.I. that sits in my office and tells me stories of his forty-plus flying missions, was going to his senior prom in June of last year. These heroes not only have to deal with the horrors of war, tedium, and ennui, but also have to hear of tragedies from home, ranging from a death of a loved one to an end of a marriage, and everything in between.

“What the heck am I doing here?” I should say, “What in Heaven.” Sometimes the only thing between tragedy and despair is the chaplain. They say that chaplains are a “visible sign of the

holy” but we are way more than that. During Holy Week, through the grace of God, I brought the Sacred Mysteries to over a thousand of our military members, coalition partners, allies, civilian contractors, and dependents. It was beyond awesome as I celebrated Easter Liturgy four times at multiple military bases. I gave Italian pilots Holy Communion; counseled Canadian military; anointed U.S. soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines; and heard hundreds of confessions. All told, during Great Lent alone, Catholic Sacraments reached over 2200 members of the armed forces, in 138 separate services at three different locations. Our bishop often tells me that God has a plan and it is a great one. I never believed it more than these past three months.

I am so fortunate to serve God’s Church and His people, as a priest, and during wartime. On the other hand, I can’t wait to come home, yet I will miss this ministry, miss these men and women because it is the adventure and experience of a lifetime.

In addition to serving the 5,000 or so military members and Department of Defense civilians on my airbase and the army encampments, we also minister to a large transient population, head-

ing downrange or heading home. It is indeed a daily challenge and a blessing from God. Our Bishop was generous to give me hundreds of sacred medals blessed by His Holiness Pope Francis to distribute to our troops. By Bright Week, only a few medals remained. Each person who received them had the same reaction—awe, surprise, and gratitude. As I distributed them, each also received Holy Anointing for additional protection and healing. All the troops that visit me, and those I visit, before going forward or returning home are anointed. What a great gift and source of comfort and grace it is to receive the Holy Mysteries of the Church, thousands of miles from home in a foreign land.

I believe that all who seek the help of the chaplain, thirst for the Lord and are fulfilled through His Grace. As Isaiah writes:

“They did not thirst when He led them through the deserts: He made the water flow out of the rock for them; He split the rock and the water gushed forth.” **ECL**

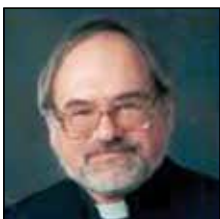
Christ is Risen! Indeed, He is Risen! *Christos voskrese! Voistinnu voskrese!*

MILITARY CHAPLAINCY

Father Frank Rella



GOD HAS A PLAN



THE BYZANTINE LITURGY

By Archpriest David Petras, SEOD

THE ANAPHORA: WE CELEBRATE THE RESURRECTION

In every Divine Liturgy, when we pray the Anaphora, we commemorate and celebrate the Resurrection of our Lord. This is explicit in the *Anamnesis* (commemoration) of the Liturgy of Saint Basil the Great: “Do this in remembrance of Me, for as often as you eat this bread and drink this chalice you proclaim My death (quoting 1 Corinthians 11:26) and profess My resurrection.” This is why Saint John Chrysostom said, “It is always Pascha!” This is also why the full Divine Liturgy is not celebrated from Monday to Friday during the Great Fast. As we abstain from our physical food, we also abstain from the spiritual commemoration of the Resurrection. However, we need the spiritual food of the Body of our Lord Jesus Christ to sustain us during the Fast, so a Divine Liturgy is celebrated, called “of the Presanctified Gifts,” and Holy Communion is received, but the prayer of the Anaphora is not said, and the gifts are those consecrated in the previous Sunday. On the days of Sab-

bath (our Saturday) and Sunday (the weekly celebration of the Resurrection, the full Divine Liturgy is celebrated.

We might ask, why is the Anaphora considered the celebration of the Resurrection? In it, we commemorate the whole plan of divine salvation for us, from the Incarnation (the taking of our human nature) to the second coming, which has not yet happened in our linear timeline, but is already certain in God’s eternal plan, as well as the Resurrection. Therefore, in the words of the *Anamnesis* (“commemoration”) after the narration of the institution, we solemnly proclaim, “Remembering, therefore, this saving command and all that has come to pass in our behalf: the cross, the tomb, the resurrection on the third day, the ascension into heaven, the sitting at the right hand, and the second coming in glory.” The Liturgy is divine, because when we are remembering and celebrating all of God’s salvation, especially His Resurrection, God is remembering and celebrating with us, and because He is eternal, the Resurrection is present today, just as his glorified Body and Blood are present in our Communion. “It is always Pascha!” and as we receive Holy Communion, the priest says it is “for life everlasting.” We do not receive the dead Body of Jesus, but his living, glorified Body.

On Tuesday after the Sunday of Resurrection (Pascha), we read the story of the encounter of the disciples with the risen Lord at Emmaus. Their eyes are held until Jesus breaks the bread in thanksgiving, the image of our Divine Liturgy. Then they recognize Him as the risen Lord and their hearts are filled with joy. This is how we are transformed every time we celebrate the Divine Liturgy and recognize that God is with us. The teaching of the risen Lord in Matthew 28:20 is fulfilled, “behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age.”

While the Resurrection underlies the plan of salvation in the Anaphora of Saint John Chrysostom, it is explicit in the Anaphora of Saint Basil the Great. In Saint Basil, we narrate Saint Paul’s description of the Liturgy from his first letter to the Corinthians, “For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the death of the Lord until He comes.” (1 Corinthians 11:26) Saint Basil adds to Paul’s proclamation the words, “and profess My resurrection.” These words, therefore, are found in both the Byzantine Liturgy, where they are said by the priest, and the Roman Liturgy, where they are chanted by the people. Thus every Liturgy is the commemoration of the Resurrection of our Lord.

This is also explicit in the narration of the story of God’s salvation in the Anaphora of Saint Basil. After telling the story of the fall of Adam, and God’s restoration of His creature through the prophets and the Law and angels, and finally, completely and perfectly through the incarnation of the Son of God “from the holy Virgin,” the priest continues, “Descending by the cross into Hades to fulfill all things in Himself, He freed us from Death’s despair, and rose on the third day, preparing the way for the resurrection of all flesh from the dead.” We profess Christ’s resurrection, because He is “the first-fruits of those who have fallen asleep.” (Anaphora of Saint Basil, quoting 1 Corinthians 15:20) While it is true that in this life, we must still face the inevitability of death, Christ has prepared the way for the resurrection. While we mourn and weep over the death of our beloved and fear our own death, “[God] will wipe every tear from their eyes, and there shall be no more death or mourning, wailing or pain.” (Revelation 21:4) We no longer live in the despair of death, but we have the hope of resurrection. Every Liturgy is the proclamation of this hope, which we profess in the Creed, “I expect the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come,” and “we ... remember ... the resurrection from the dead.” **ECL**



The longer we live and the more time passes us by, we realize that life is long and many aspects of it are fleeting. Through our lives we see how things change: society changes, technology changes, the way we think changes, and our bodies change. This constant flux can leave us asking many questions: does anything stay the same? is there anything I can count on? and, how do I deal with all of these changes? In light of these difficulties, we are grateful for one constant: Jesus Christ, who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

Jesus’ ministry has explained to us many mysteries about God and about the true nature of Man. But there is one phrase which Jesus repeats to those He encounters, which is: “Follow me.” This simple phrase contains a lifetime of work and instruction for us to unpack. To follow Jesus is to literally go after Him, to walk behind Him, to eat with Him, to listen to Him, and most importantly, to imitate His intentions and actions. To follow Jesus Christ—in His Way, in The Truth, and in His Life—is to allow these three elements to trans-

form our hearts of stone into hearts of true flesh.

When our hearts are hardened, we tend to be centered on our own self or on worldly things. Living only for ourselves and satisfying our own desires leads to contempt for the other children of God with whom we share the world. These people seem to be in our way, and we can blame them for hindering our pursuit of pleasure and comfort. In this state of a hardened heart, we can also see others as being of less value than we are; therefore, they become a hindrance when we are forced to encounter them. But when we compare these disordered actions with the teachings and actions of Jesus Christ, we see how diametrically opposed they are, and if we can actually see that opposition, then we realize that a change must occur.

The Way. Jesus’s whole life was a continuous act of virtue, because at every turn He was the personification of God’s laws. Jesus poured out unconditional love for every person He met.

He also patiently endured the stubbornness of His sheep—especially His Apostles—and all manner of human frailty and ignorance. Part of The Way, then, is to show patience to our fellow man and endure his faults. Each person has his or her own experience of fears, challenges, illnesses, hopes, desires, and understanding of how love should be practiced. Each person is at a different stage in life and on a different spot on his or her spiritual path towards God. We cannot control how other people think or act or behave, but we can control the manner in which we show others the comprehensive love that Christ showed us.

The Truth. When we honestly look back on our own lives, we can see the many mistakes and foibles we have gone through or are still going through. When we realize our own faults and weaknesses, we are more likely to be patient with the weaknesses and difficulties of others. Others may have a heart of flesh or a heart of stone, but when we recognize each person as a child, and gift, from God, then we can see the

Truth, the Spirit of God, that is present in each one of us, and treat them with the same respect and love that is due to God.

The Life. When we decide for ourselves that we are going to truly adhere to Jesus’ invitation to “follow me,” then we will embark on The Life in Christ. When we humble ourselves and allow The Holy Trinity to work in and through us, we will enact and live an enduring patience. This practice of patience will transform the small moments of every day and will allow us to reject bitterness at the many changing situations we find ourselves in. Patience also helps us to deal with the fleeting nature of our world, because patience is rooted in Jesus Christ, who is the Eternal Word, who spoke the universe into existence, and He will be the Judge of All at the end of the age. **ECL**

SPIRITUAL REFLECTIONS

Father Lewis Rabayda



ENDURING PATIENCE

Our Festal Menaion abounds in hymns of praise for our celebration of the Feast of the Nativity of the holy Forerunner, Prophet, and Baptist John. This feast tends to be overshadowed by the great feast celebrating the Pre-eminent Apostles Peter and Paul, but it is a key point in our salvation history to celebrate the birth of the Forerunner. I have chosen a few of these hymns from the Vespers to highlight for us how special and important this feast is for us.

“When the time approached for the Word of God to be born from a Virgin, a Messenger came forth from a barren womb. He is the greatest born of a woman and the greatest of the prophets. Behold, the beginnings of God’s actions are beyond our understanding. You were begotten eternally and conceived without seed; You work wonders for our salvation. Glory to You!”

“O John, the Baptizer of Christ, you manifested yourself to be a prophet and forerunner from the time you were in the womb. When you saw the queen coming to her servant, you leaped for joy in the womb of your mother, you, the one conceived of a barren woman, according to the promise made to the elder Zechariah. You knew she was bearing the eternal One Who was from the Father without a mother. Now implore God to have mercy on our souls.”

“Elizabeth said to the Virgin Mary: How is it that the Mother of my God has come to me? You bear the King,

“THE BABY LEAPED IN MY WOMB OUT OF JOY!”

and I, a soldier. You bear the Lawgiver, and I, a preacher of the law. You bear the Word, and I, the voice who announces the kingdom of heaven.”

When I read through the Vespers and Matins for this feast, it is difficult not to “leap for joy” myself for all God has done for us, as we continue to celebrate the Paschal season, and for His works for our redemption and salvation. The above hymns are just a taste of what we hear during these services, and if we can sing them and meditate on them, the true joy of Zechariah and Elizabeth can become our joy as well.

One of the things we can bring to the celebration of the Nativity of John is the celebration of the sanctity of life, and our belief—nay, the fact—that life begins at conception. “And it happened that when Elizabeth heard Mary’s greeting, the baby leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. In a loud voice, she exclaimed, ‘Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! Why am I so favored, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For behold, when the voice of your greeting came to my ears, the baby leaped in my womb out of joy!’ (Luke 1:41-44, EOB). And in this quotation of Elizabeth, we

see not only that John, at this point 6 months in the womb (Luke 1:36) can acknowledge the presence of his Lord and cousin, Jesus, in the womb of the Virgin Mary, it also confirms the title the ancient Church gave to the Blessed Mother in calling her “Theotokos,” (Greek) “Bohorodice” (Slavonic)—“The God-birther,” the “Mother of God” (cf. verse 43). So, although we

celebrate John’s birth on this feast, we also, through Scripture and the hymns of the Church, affirm these basic tenets of Catholic belief.

In the midst of our celebration of the Feast of the Pre-eminent Apostles, let us not forget to celebrate with fervor and joy the Nativity of the Forerunner, Prophet, and Baptist, John. **ECL**



SEASONAL REFLECTIONS

Father Ronald Hatton

Women in the Bible and in the Church Today —Byzantine Woman's Day of Recollection—

Saturday, July 13, 2019

Holy Dormition Byzantine Franciscan Monastery,
Sybertsville, PA



Father Jerome Wolbert,
OFM
Celebrant and Speaker

Beginning at 8:30 AM with Divine Liturgy
Activities concluding at 3:00 PM

Fee: \$40.00 includes pastry and coffee in AM & a light lunch.

For Information or Reservations call:

Carol Soemer (570) 969-1756 or

Gina Romanchek (570) 956-9272

or email Gina at: gmr7@ptd.net

Deadline: July 6, 2019



SCHOOL OF PRAYER

Father G. Scott Boghossian

PRAY FOR PRIESTS

Saint John Vianney says, “the priest continues the work of redemption on earth... If we really understood the priest on earth, we would not die of fright, but of love... The priest is the love of the heart of Jesus.”

Our Redeemer Jesus Christ instituted the Catholic priesthood on Holy Thursday when He ordered his apostles to offer the Divine Liturgy, saying, “Do this in memory of me.” It was at his moment that He made his apostles priests. That same priesthood has been preserved for almost two thousand years, passed on to us today through the laying on of hands in the Sacrament of Holy Orders.

Historic Christianity, i.e., Catholicism, requires the priesthood. It is a necessity. Priests are Christ’s chosen representatives, appointed to teach the Word of God, to shepherd the faithful, to offer the Divine Liturgy, and to absolve from sin in the sacrament of penance.

What would we do without the priesthood? Without the priest, we would not have the Divine Liturgy, the

Eucharist, Chrismation, Confession, or Holy Anointing. Without the grace of these sacraments, persevering in the state of sanctifying grace would be next to impossible. If getting to heaven with a sacramental priesthood is difficult, and it is, then how would we ever be saved without one?

Servant of God Father John Hardon, SJ, writes, “One saint after another has declared that the devil’s principal target on earth is the Catholic priest.” We need to pray for our priests. They are under constant attack by the world, the flesh, and the devil. The evil one knows that if he destroys a priest, he will destroy many souls along with him. Because of the shortage of priests today, many priests feel overworked and under-appreciated. When discouragement creeps in, the man of God becomes more vulnerable than ever to spiritual assault. For a priest to fulfill his vocation, he needs a strong prayer life, an intense faith, a great devotion to Christ and the Mother of God, and zeal for the salvation of his flock.

For a priest to be effective, he must be holy. Dom Chautard tells us that

“if the priest is a saint, the people will be fervent; if the priest is fervent, the people will be pious; if the priest is pious, the people will at least be decent; if the priest is only decent, the people will be godless.” But if the faithful fail to pray for their priests, they may find that very few are even decent. Priests need strength and wisdom to fulfill the duties of their state and to live a holy life in a very unholy world. They need your prayers.

Priests must lead by example. Saint John Chrysostom writes, “If priests sin, all the people are led to sin. Hence everyone must render an account of his own sins, but the priests are also responsible for the sins of others.” Recently, we’ve heard about many priests who have failed in their ministry. We know about abuse, misconduct, and serious scandal. Every man is responsible for his own sins. No priest can blame anyone else for moral and spiritual failure. Yet, if we had been praying fervently for our priests, would such scandals have occurred? It is a dogma of faith that God hears and answers prayer. The current tragedy in the priesthood

might have been prevented if only we had more frequently prayed, fasted, and offered sacrifices for our priests.

Servant of God Father John Hardon writes: “I would recommend that all the faithful daily offer at least one prayer for all the priests in the Church and especially for those who have done most for them in their lives.” Remember especially the priest who baptized you, who blessed your marriage, who heard your confession or counseled you during a difficult time. And what about the priests who have died? Scripture is clear that priests will be judged more strictly, “for to whom much is given, much is required” (Lk. 12:48).

Without priests, there is no Catholic faith. Be grateful for the gift of the priesthood and the role God has given them in the plan of salvation. Saint John Chrysostom writes, “For the office of the priesthood is executed upon earth, yet it ranks amongst things that are heavenly, and with good reason... Wherefore it behooves the priest to be as pure as if he stood in heaven itself amidst those [angelic] Powers.” The demands of the priesthood are great. Please pray for priests, both living and deceased, every day. And remember to thank God for the wonderful gift of the Catholic priesthood! **ECL**

**TOGETHER WE ARE:
CALLED TO
DISCIPLESHIP.
TRANSFIGURED
THROUGH A NEW LIFE
IN CHRIST.
SENT TO PROCLAIM
THE GOSPEL TO THE
WORLD.**

Hosted by the Eparchy of Passaic and Theosis in Action, the convocation is open to young adults between the ages of 18-35.

This event will coincide with the feast of the Transfiguration, and will challenge participants to recognize their own call to discipleship. Featured keynote speakers include Fr. Boniface Hicks, OSB; Mother Gabriella Houck of the Sisters of Christ the Bridegroom Monastery; and Katie Prejean McGrady.

Information about registration, events, and lodging options are available at theosisinaction.org

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THE EPARCHY OF PASSAIC & THEOSIS IN ACTION PRESENT

**2019
BYZANTINE CATHOLIC
YOUNG ADULT
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AUGUST 1-4, 2019

**ST. MARY'S BYZANTINE
CATHOLIC CHURCH**

NEW YORK CITY

"If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me."
-Mat 16:24



Altar Server Camp at the Carpathian Village

July 21-24, 2019

Come join altar servers from around the Eparchy for fun activities, and opportunities to learn about our faith.

Registration forms are on the Eparchy's website at:
www.eparchyofpassaic.com

Carpathian Village 802 Snow Hill RD, Canadensis, PA 18326



UPCOMING EPARCHIAL AND PARISH EVENTS

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June, 2019

- 9 Pentecost
The Descent of the Holy Spirit
- 10 Pentecost Monday
- 16 Sunday of All Saints
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Parma, OH
- 23 Golden Jubilee of Metropolitan Church of Pittsburgh
Pittsburgh, PA
- 24 Nativity of John the Baptist
Solemn Holyday
- 29 Holy Prime Apostles Peter and Paul
Holy Day of Obligation

JULY, 2019

- 4 Independence Day
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AUGUST, 2019

- 1-4 Young Adult Convocation
New York City
- 4 Annual Saint Nicholas Pilgrimage
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- 6 Holy Transfiguration of Our Lord
Solemn Holyday
- 15 Holy Dormition of the Theotokos
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