



EASTERN CATHOLIC LIFE

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2018 BYZANTEEN RALLY

This article appears courtesy of the Byzantine Catholic World

Eighty-nine teens and 22 chaperones from Arizona to New Jersey participated in the July 5 to 8 Byzantine Youth Rally 2018 at Saint Vincent College, Latrobe, PA.

The theme for this year's rally was *Who is My Neighbor?*, taken from the parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10: 25-37).

In addition, this theme was chosen to reflect the popular song, *Won't You Be My Neighbor?*, from the public television program "Mister Rogers' Neighborhood" because the archives of Fred Rogers are housed at Saint Vincent College in the Fred Rogers Center, where many of the Rally events took place.

The Rally began on the evening of July 5 with the keynote address presented by Father Boniface Hicks, OSB, a Benedictine monk of Saint Vincent Archabbey, director of spiritual formation at Saint Vincent Seminary, and general manager, programming manager and on-air host of *We Are One Body* (WAOB) Catholic radio.

Father Boniface's remarks centered on the theme of *Who is My Neighbor?*

The teens began their first full day of the Rally on July 6 with breakfast and morning prayer, using the Third Hour.

Following prayer, Father Boniface addressed the teens again about the spiritual aspect of service, particularly relating it to the service project the teens would be working on the next day.

Following this conference, Mr. Brady Smith from the local office of *Rise Against Hunger*, spoke to the teens about the history and mission of his organization.

Mr. Smith engaged the teens in a presentation that outlined the problem of hunger in our world, the steps this organization is taking to stem the

tide of this worldwide problem, and the role the teens would play during their participation in the service project the following morning.

Following lunch, the afternoon was spent either swimming, playing basketball, visiting the on-campus planetarium, or using their vocal skills for choir practice in preparation for the Divine Liturgy Saturday evening.

Following dinner, the teens listened to a presentation by Father Peter Borza of the Archeparchy of Presov, Slovakia, about our martyred Greek Catholic bishops of Europe. The evening concluded with the celebration of the Mystery of Reconciliation and the praying of the Panachida, remembering their deceased loved ones, and an evening social.

Saturday began with breakfast and morning prayer. At the conclusion of morning prayer, the teens walked to the Fred Rogers Center where they would put their faith into action and package meals for the organization *Rise Against Hunger*.

Work stations were set up in a massive space where the teens would work together to assemble the food packets.

Popular music played which motivated the teens to the point that towards the end of the service project they broke out into spontaneous line dancing.

In the end, our teens filled 20,000 meal packets which will be sent to various countries throughout the world.

Before the pallets of boxes were loaded on the truck, Bishop John of the Eparchy of Phoenix and Bishop Milan of the Eparchy of Parma blessed the meals. Mr. Smith and his assistants commented that our ByzanTeens were among the finest they have seen participate in such an event.

After lunch, the teens enjoyed another afternoon of sports, choir practice or nature walk.

Following a break, the teens participated in the celebration of the Vigil Divine Liturgy. Metropolitan William was the main celebrant, with Bishop John (Pazak), Bishop Kurt, Bishop Milan, and Bishop John (Kudrick) concelebrating along with priest members of the Intereparchial Youth Commission.

The evening concluded with dinner and dancing, concluding in a "build



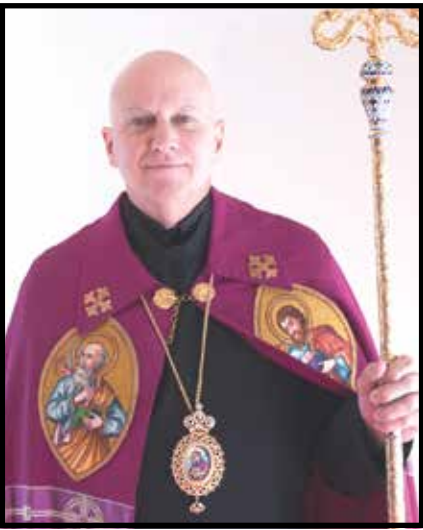
Father Boniface Hicks, OSB

your own banana split" treat. Following breakfast and morning prayer, the teens gathered for an evaluation of the weekend, and the announcement that the next ByzanTeen Rally 2020 will take place in San Diego.

The teens returned to their respective eparchies with new friends and fond memories.



Continued on page 6



I LIFT UP MY EYES...

Pastoral Reflections of Bishop Kurt



NEW BEGINNINGS

Everyone says, “Turn over a new leaf.” Unfortunately, some of the leaves outside my house are starting to turn yellow. It means the trees are already preparing for fall and winter. The expression, “Turn over a new leaf,” doesn’t refer to leaves on a tree, but to the leaves of a note book. “Turn over a new leaf” means “Start a fresh page in your life”. Speaking of the season of fall, I learned something entertaining when I was trying to study in Eastern Europe last year. While the Russians began using the western names for months, the Ukrainians and Poles have retained the older names from pre-Christian times. Slovak also uses the western names, like English. In Ukrainian, the name for November is “Listopad,” which means “leaf fall.” I don’t have to explain why November is called “leaf fall,” do I? The amusing thing that I learned is that when the Ukrainians, as did the Russians, rejected Marxism-Leninism with the collapse of the Soviet Union, they toppled the statues of Lenin that populated the entire landscape. When I was in Russia in 1996, I saw a statue of Lenin in Kronstadt, and the tour guide told us that it was one of only three left in Russia! The Ukrainians began calling the movement “Leninopad” instead of “Listopad”—in other words, “Lenin fall” instead of “leaf fall.” Some men in history were so important, in worldly terms, that they have a month named after them: for example, Julius Caesar and Augustus Caesar. It takes a special level of incompetence to have a month renamed after your fall instead of your accomplishments. The only

place where Marxism-Leninism is still respected is among university professors and their naïve sycophants in western universities.

When I think of a new beginning, I usually think of the season of spring, as do many people. It’s the season to fall in love. On the other hand, many people make resolutions to start over on New Year’s Day, that is January 1. Did you know that the ancient Romans, whose calendar we adopted, originally began their year with March, not January? That’s why September, October, November, and December have their names, which mean seventh, eighth, ninth, and tenth. The old Roman calendar only had ten months. Numa Pompilius added January and February about 700 years before Christ. It may have replaced March as the first month about three hundred years later, but the ancient historians don’t agree on when or why they moved the beginning of the year to January.

As I mentioned, people often think of new beginnings in the Spring, or on January 1, but in the eastern Roman empire, from where our Church takes its traditions, the official new year began on September 1. So every year, we begin our calendar of feast days on September 1. That day is called “the Indiction”. This year, on the day September 1, 2018, we will begin the year 7527 *Anno Mundi* of the calendar of the eastern Roman Empire. The ancient Romans counted the years from the foundation of the City of Rome, and the Christian eastern Roman empire counted the years from when they believed the world was created, that is, the year beginning September 1, 5509 BC. The Russians and Ukrainians adopted this calendar when they accepted Christianity from Constantinople, and they continued to use this calendar until Peter the Great. As you might recall, there was

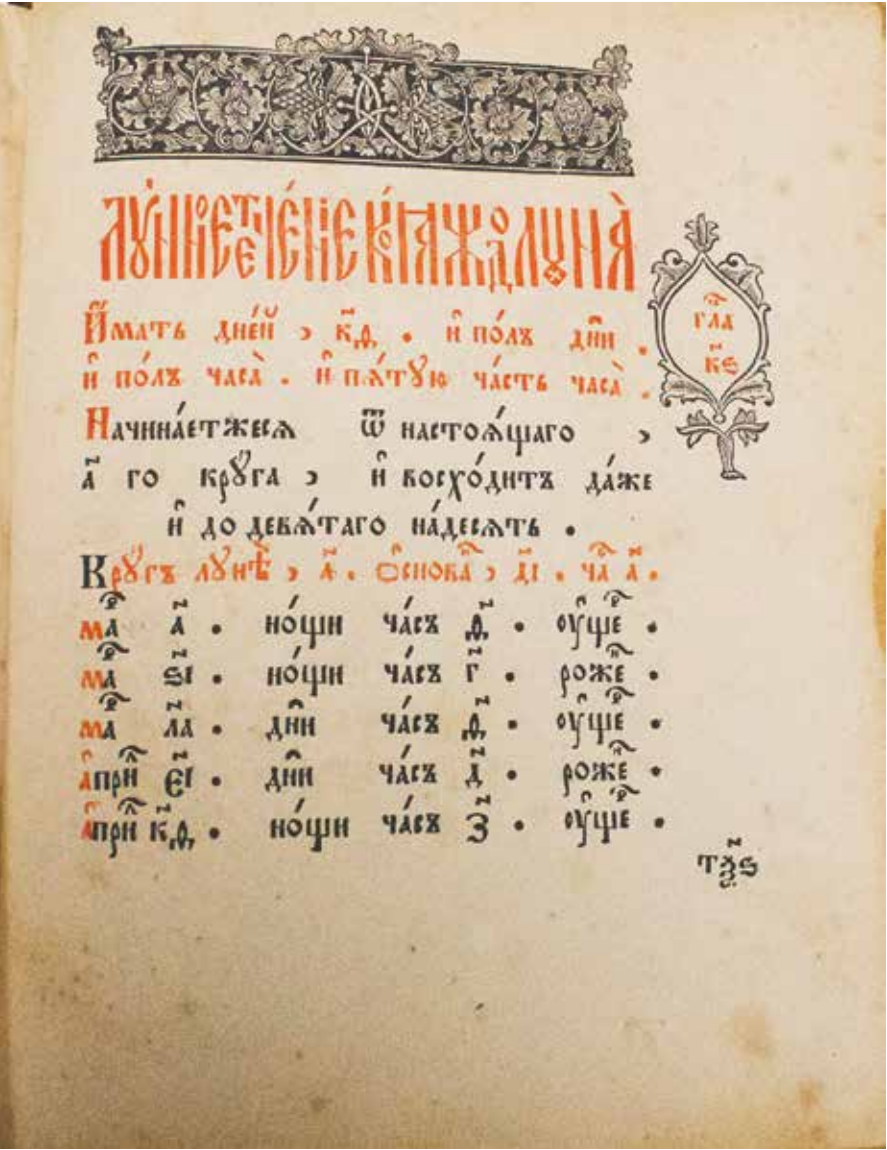
some popular upheaval in our culture when the years went from 1999 to 2000, and there was even more upheaval when the years went from 999 to 1000. Interestingly enough there was popular upheaval, called millennialist movements, in the Russian Empire in the year 1492 because it was the beginning of the year 7000 on the calendar of both the government and the Orthodox Church. I wonder if they called it the Y7K bug?

God says, “I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you. I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh.”

In our tradition, we remember a powerful ally at the beginning of the new year. At the beginning of September we celebrate the birthday of the Mother of God. At the beginning of October we celebrate the Protection of the Mother of God. In No-



The Kazan Mother of God



Calendar in Old Church Slavonic

God tells us, through the prophet Zechariah, “Return to me, declares the Lord of Sabaoth, that I may return to you.” In the prophet Job, He says, “Rend you heart, not your garments. Now return to the Lord your God, for He is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger, and abounding in loving kindness.” In the prophet Malachi, God says, “Return to Me, and I will return to you.” In the New Testament, Saint James says, “Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts you of double mind.”

Every time of year is a good time to make a new beginning. The most important new beginning is repentance, metanoia, turning our hearts back to God. Turning back to God means turning our backs on the idols that have distracted us, the idols that have taken our gaze from the true God, the Creator. Repentance means returning to worship the Creator, instead of His creatures. Repentance means confessing our sins before God, and apologizing to anyone we have injured, as well as forgiving anyone who has injured us. We don’t have the power to turn our hearts back to God without the grace of God. In the prophet Ezekiel,

vember we celebrate the Entrance of the Mother of God into the temple. And at the beginning of December, we celebrate the Conception of the Mother of God by Saint Ann. What better way is there to celebrate new beginnings than with the one who gave birth to the Messiah?

In our Church, we truly love the Mother of God and we also love her many icons. The reason we have icons of the Mother of God, especially the ones in which she holds her infant son, is that God entered into the material world in a singular way when He chose to take flesh from her. As Saint John begins his first Epistle, Jesus “was from the beginning which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon and touched with our hands.”

Here at the chancery there are a great many hand painted icons. I took the time to count the number of hand painted icons of the Mother of God in our collection. Only in the chancery office and the heritage center we have three hundred and eleven icons of the Mother of God, that I was able to count. I probably missed some. I didn’t count reproductions, only hand painted icons, or as the purists say, “hand-written.”

When you enter the chancery office, you are greeted by a regal Vladimir icon that is over five feet tall (not counting the frame). It was painted by Christine Dochwat for the Ukrainian cathedral in Philadelphia, but found a home here instead. Mary has greeted people who have come to our chancery or museum for 32 years, bigger than life but with an equally big heart. Then there are full icons of the Mother of God that are less than one half inch tall, painted into larger icons. There is an icon called the *Kazan Mother of God* in our collection that is over two and half feet high on wood, with the

most tender face. It is the icon reproduced with this article. How many treasures have been gathered over the years by the people and the clergy of the Eparchy of Passaic into this thesaurus! What a display of affection by the people! If you have not yet visited your heritage center in Woodland Park, I hope you will stop by in the future. Call the Chancery to find a convenient time. These are your treasures.

With the “new year,” the year 7527 *Anno Mundi*, consider making a new beginning with God. Put aside the sins of the past. Turn your gaze from the creatures to the

Creator. Make a good confession. Mend fences with friends and family. When you can’t untangle the past, leave it in God’s hands. As for my part, in whatever way I have injured anyone in our Church, I ask for your forgiveness. As we celebrate four feast days of the Mother of God in the next four months, renew your love for her divine Son, who took on flesh to be with us in the flesh and to die in the flesh for our sins. And remember that as we make childish mistakes in life, we have a mother who watches over us. We have a mother who stood by the cross of Jesus and stands by us in our

crosses too. Saint John describes one of the last acts of Jesus on the cross: “When Jesus saw His mother, and the disciple whom He loved standing near, He said to His mother, ‘Woman, behold your son!’ Then He said to the disciple, ‘Behold, your mother!’ And from that hour the disciple took her to his own home.”

+Kurt Burnette

BASILIAN SISTERS CELEBRATE ANNIVERSARY OF RELIGIOUS LIFE

July 31, 2018, Uniontown, PA

Amidst the flurry of activities and the full schedule planned for the annual Community Days at Mount Saint Macrina, there is always time to celebrate. This summer four sisters joyfully marked significant milestones in their lives as Sisters of Saint Basil. As the second oldest member of the community, Sister Gertrude Martin celebrated the Diamond Anniversary of her religious life.

Since Sister Gertrude resides at the Manor, the Sisters joined her in a celebration on the Monday afternoon of Community Days. After singing two odes of the Akathist to Our Lady of Perpetual Help, a social was held in the Manor’s Oaks Dining Room where Sister Gertrude received the congratulations, gifts, and well-wishes of the sisters.

Tuesday afternoon found the sisters gathered in the chapel for a Divine Liturgy of Thanksgiving offered by the monastery chaplain, Father Peter Leigh, for all the Jubilarians. Besides Sister Gertrude, Sister Christopher Malcovsky observed her 70th Anniversary, and Sister Monica Husovich and Sister Agnes Herbenick observed their 60th Anniversary. From the beginning processional to the final singing of “God grant you many years” the Divine Liturgy was an inspiration as all raised their voices in thanksgiving for the gift of each Sister Jubilarians’ vocation.

Sister Gertrude (Irene) Martin, OSBM 75th Anniversary

Sister Gertrude entered the Community from Saint John the Cathedral Parish, Muncie, PA. She spent 33 years molding young minds and morals as a teacher mostly in the primary grades in parish schools in NJ, PA, IL, and IN. Her education apostolate included 12 years as principal. Sister holds a B.S. in Elementary Education from Misericordia College, Dallas, PA.

From 1975 through 1980, while continuing to teach, Sister was a member of the Provincial Council. During the latter half of this term, she moved from teaching to serve as assistant house director at the monastery. Sister Gertrude was then

assigned as administrator of Saint Basil’s Home from 1980 through 1986. A brief return to teaching took her to Saint Mary Assumption Church, Trenton, NJ, where she spent three years. Sister Gertrude was a familiar face as the manager of the Religious Gift Shop at Mount Saint Macrina for a good number of years. Presently, she resides at Mount Macrina Manor.

70th Anniversary

Sister Christopher Malcovsky entered the community from Saint Mary Parish in Nesquehoning, PA.

Her beginning years were spent as a teacher and principal. She then served as Motherhouse Superior and elected Provincial Superior for two terms. After a sabbatical year, Sister Christopher served in various capacities, assisting with the organizational work in the Eparchy of Van Nuys (now the Eparchy of Phoenix), and helping at Mount Macrina Manor and the House of Prayer. In 1983, Sister was elected as General Superior, serving in Rome for six years.

From 1991 until 2008, Sister Christopher served in the Eparchy of Van Nuys as Pastoral Associate, first at the Cathedral of Saint Mary (now Pro-Cathedral of Saint Mary) in Van Nuys, CA, and then at Saint Stephen Pro-Cathedral (now Saint Stephen Cathedral), Phoenix, AZ. Additionally, she also managed the apartment complex at Saint Stephen Cathedral. Presently, Sister Christopher resides at the Monastery; she assists part-time in the Religious Gift Shop and, otherwise, generously offers her services wherever needed.

60th Anniversary

Sister Monica Husovich entered the Sisters of Saint Basil from Saint Mary Parish in Freeland, PA. She served as both teacher and principal in parish school principally in PA, but also in IN and OH. Sister Monica also taught at Byzantine Catholic High School in Parma, OH. While teaching in Northeast PA, she served as a member of the Catechetical Board for the Eparchy of Passaic. Sister Monica then served on the staff of Mount Macrina Manor, first in the business office, and later, as Admissions



Sister Gertrude (Irene) Martin, OSBM, Sister Christopher Malcovsky, OSBM, and Sister Agnes Herbenick, OSBM

and Resident Coordinator. Following her retirement from the Manor, Sister Monica kept busy taking the Monastery sisters for their appointments as needed; she also faithfully takes care of posting the prayer requests sent to the community.

Sister Agnes Herbenick came to the community from Saint John Parish in Lyndora, PA. Her principal ministry has been in the educational field, serving as a teacher in parish schools in PA, CT, NJ, and OH. For 25 years, she guided eighth graders at Saint Mary School in Cleveland, OH. Sister Agnes’ other assignments included catechetical ministry in Binghamton, NY; postulant directress for the community, and member of the Mount Macrina Manor Board of Directors. After retiring from the teaching ministry, Sister Agnes returned to the monastery, where today she serves as sacristan. In addition, she works part-time in pastoral ministry at Mount Macrina Manor.

Each of the jubilarians has actively served the Church in a variety of ways, each sister giving witness to the priority God has in her life. Not able to be enumerated or even noted are, surely, the countless lives which have been touched by personal contact with these sister jubilarians. For all of these sisters, and for the giftedness with

which the community has been enriched and blessed, it was with heartfelt gratitude, that “God grant them many years” was sung as we joined together for a celebratory meal following the Divine Liturgy.

About the Sisters of Saint Basil

The Sisters of Saint Basil the Great respond in sensitivity and service to the needs of the Catholic Church and of the people. Their ministries encompass prayer, education, communications, cultural and heritage studies, translation and publication of liturgical books, religious education and organizational work, iconography and fine arts, health-related services, retreat work, and, social and pastoral ministry. Sisters also serve in the chanceries of the various Byzantine Catholic Eparchies (Dioceses), and in the Generalate, their headquarters in Rome. The Sisters are known internationally for their annual Pilgrimage in Honor of Our Lady of Perpetual Help. For further information, contact the Sisters directly at (724) 438-8644 or visit www.sister-sofstbasil.org.

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PEOPLE YOU KNOW

IN ANNANDALE...

With active Lenten Dinner, bingo, and Slavic American Festival programs bringing in hundreds of outside guests, safeguarding those guests – and the cash they bring to spend – is important. That's why the Epiphany Men's Club sponsored guest speaker, Master Police Officer Eddie Azcarate, to discuss "situational awareness" in major events with "Cash and Crowds."



Jeff Nashwinter, Men's Club President; MPO Azcarate; and Father John Basarab

IN MYRTLE BEACH...

Father Mykhaylo Farynets of Infant Jesus of Prague Byzantine Catholic Church in Boardman, OH, celebrated Divine Liturgy at the Blessed Basil Hopko Byzantine Catholic Mission in Myrtle Beach, SC. Father Mykhaylo also blessed fruit in honor of the Transfiguration.



Father Mykhaylo cences the fruit for the blessing on Transfiguration



IN MANHATTAN...

Young Adult Ministry

On Sunday, August 5, 2018, at Saint Mary Byzantine Catholic Church in New York City, young adults gathered from around the area to celebrate the Feast of the Transfiguration with Divine Liturgy, followed by coffee and refreshments, then Vespers with a blessing of the first fruits. It was a great opportunity for Father Ed Cimbala, the new pastor of Saint Mary Parish, to meet the young adults and celebrate this beautiful Feast as a parish family. Saint Mary Parish will be hosting monthly Young Adult events, so stay tuned! If you know any young adults in the NYC area, please have them email Father Ed (fredcimbala@gmail.com) and Like our Facebook page to stay updated. Next Young Adult Divine Liturgy is Sunday, September 9, 2018, at 10AM.



AROUND THE EPARCHY



IN LANSFORD...

Young People Visit Sugarloaf Monastery

On July 28, ECF students, instructors, and young families from Saint John the Baptist Parish in Lansford, PA, spent a day at the Holy Annunciation Byzantine Monastery in Sugarloaf, PA. They visited the beautiful chapel, had a tour of the monastic grounds, learning more about Carmelite Sisters and their service to the Church. They also visited the Carmelite Kitchen and saw the miniature horses! It was a day of spiritual renewal, filled with fun and joy for all who attended, where everyone experienced the peaceful and prayerful atmosphere of this holy place.



IN ROSWELL...

Children's Marian Flower Procession, Photos by Bryan Marks

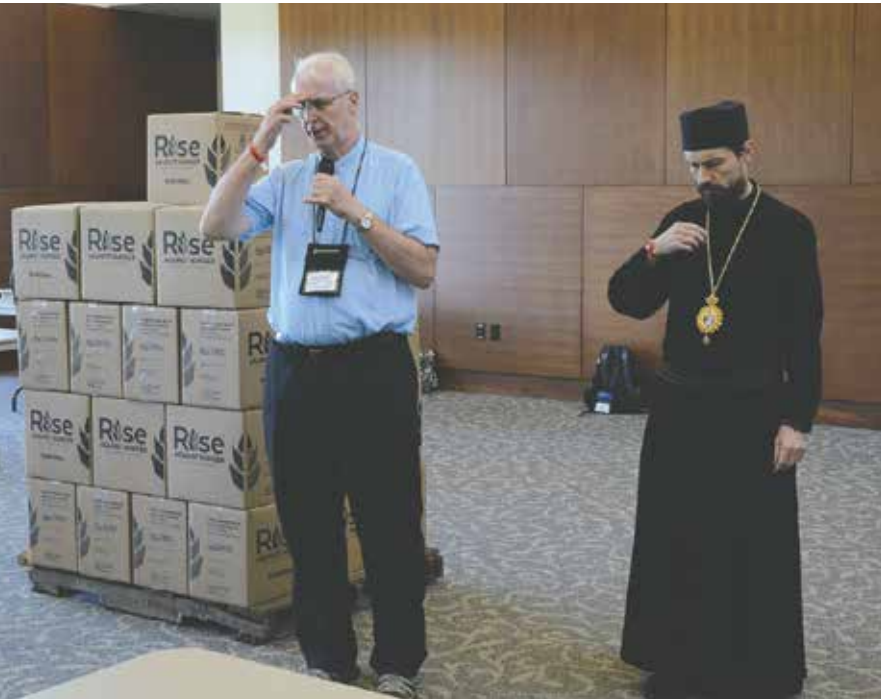
On August 15th, the Feast of the Dormition of the Theotokos, the children of Epiphany of Our Lord Byzantine Catholic Church in Roswell, GA, processed to the burial shroud of Our Lady to present her with flowers before the celebration of the Divine Liturgy. Father Lewis Rabayda is Parochial Administrator, serving with Father Deacon Michael Tisma, Father Deacon James Smith, and Subdeacon John Reed.





2018 BYZANTINE RALLY

Continued from page 1



FROM THE PULPIT, PRIESTS ADDRESS ALLEGATIONS AGAINST ARCHBISHOP McCARRICK

By Carol Zimmermann Catholic News Service, Washington, DC

For his homilies on the weekend of July 21-22, Father Edward Looney, administrator of two rural Wisconsin parishes, planned to preach about ways to include God on summer vacation.

His rough outline was scribbled on Post-it notes.

But during the Saturday evening Mass when he heard the opening lines of the first reading from Jeremiah, the priest switched gears, deciding he had to say something about sexual abuse allegations against now former Cardinal Theodore E. McCarrick, retired archbishop of Washington.

“Woe to the shepherds who destroy and scatter the flock of my pasture,” the passage from Jeremiah 23 begins.

It goes on to deliver harsh words for shepherds who have not cared for their sheep and says they will be punished for their evil deeds.

The message was not lost on Father Looney, who was ordained in 2015 and is frequently a guest on EWTN Radio’s “Morning Glory” program.

“I thought about it and when I got to the ambo I knew it was a game-time decision” for a new homily, he told Catholic News Service.

So, for the 4 p.m. Mass July 21 at Saint Peter and Saint Hubert Parish in Rosiere, Wisconsin, and subsequent Masses there and at Saint Francis and Saint Mary Catholic Church about 10 minutes away in Brussels, the priest linked the Old Testament passage with the current situation in the church.

He urged parishioners to pray for all affected by recent abuse allegations, for anyone who had been abused and also for the “perpetrator” to come to a point of repentance, admitting guilt and asking forgiveness of God and others.

He said the issue is close to home because a priest had been found guilty of sexual abuse years ago in a neighboring town.

Father Looney put his homily on social media, as he often does, and one person who responded thanked him, saying he had been an abuse victim and hadn’t lost faith in the church, which he still prayed for, but had lost faith in priests.

About 700 miles away, the same reading that inspired Father Looney also moved inspired Father Alek Schrenk’s homily in Butler, Pennsylvania. Father Schrenk, parochial vicar of three small parishes -- Saint Michael, Saint Paul and Saint Peter -- said that in light of the first reading he didn’t see how he couldn’t address the abuse allegations, noting that he was still struggling to deal with it “just as much as anyone.”

The priest, who was ordained just last year and will get a new assignment in the fall with the reorganization of parishes in the Pittsburgh Diocese, said he felt the need to speak out about “abuse of power in the church,” especially since it is on many people’s minds locally with the upcoming release of the grand jury report on an investigation of clergy sexual abuse claims, many decades old, in the Pittsburgh Diocese and five other Pennsylvania dioceses.

He also said he thought parishioners needed to hear a priest speak about this situation honestly and “give them a lens to look at it through faith.”

After Mass, the feedback was uniformly positive, he said, and a lot of people told him it took a lot of courage.

It was a homily he had prepared, writing it out to be sure he had the phrasing correct because he didn’t want to turn his parishioners against church leaders, he said. But when he read it at the first Mass, he felt emotional, with what he described as righteous anger.

“I felt betrayed as a priest,” he told CNS.

One parishioner told him he was glad he hadn’t pushed the issue under the rug. Another person, visiting from the Diocese of Erie, Pennsylvania, said he came from a parish where his pastor had been removed because of abuse and asked for a copy of the homily to so he could send it to his family.

Father Schrenk said the situation is discouraging but he said it also can make people realize “we can do something to repair the damage. We can take what’s so good about the church and salvage that and highlight that.”

The priest, who was in seventh grade when the church abuse crisis was headline news, said it “has become more obvious that the road to healing is longer than we thought” and requires “a systemic overhaul.”

In the Washington Archdiocese, which Archbishop McCarrick led from 2001 until his retirement in 2006, some priests mentioned the abuse allegations that first weekend after they were made public June 20. Others spoke about it the weekend of July 28-29 after the Vatican announced that Pope Francis had accepted Cardinal McCarrick’s resignation from College of Cardinals and ordered him to maintain “a life of prayer and penance” until his canonical trial.

Conventual Franciscan Father Matt Foley, a weekend presider at Saint Rose of Lima Parish in Gaithersburg, Maryland, said in his July 29 homily that it had been a “rough couple of weeks” for Catholics and said the response to the current news should be to “redouble our faithfulness” and remember “we are not alone in our life of faith.”

Deacon Greg Kandra, of Brooklyn, New York, and author of “The Deacon’s Bench” blog, also felt compelled to speak about Archbishop McCarrick in a homily, even though he was not scheduled to preach the July 28-29 weekend.

He published the homily he would have given on his blog, which was shared thousands of times and posted on the Facebook page of one parish.

In his reflection, he referred to the first official observance of the feast of Blessed Stanley Rother, a priest from Oklahoma who served as a missionary in Guatemala during its civil war when priests and religious were often targeted. The priest, who was attacked and killed in the rectory in 1981, had told his family he couldn’t leave because “a shepherd doesn’t run at the first sign of danger.”

Deacon Kandra said those words are good to remember, especially now, “because the headlines the last few weeks have made something all too clear: Too many of our shepherds ran. They looked the other way. They enabled sin.”

“Many people have written to me, outraged,” the deacon said. “They are angry. They feel betrayed. But there is something else they feel. Like the thousands of people in the Gospel we just heard, they feel hunger. They are hungry for justice. Hungry for accountability.”

He noted that we live in “treacherous, traitorous times” and that “things may get worse before they get better. But they will get better. They will.”

The deacon urged readers not to despair and outlined the many reasons why he remains Catholic, ending with: “I am Catholic. Despite everything. Because of everything. I am Catholic. This is my faith.”



The Prophet Jeremiah

Office for a Safe Environment in Ministry
Byzantine Catholic Eparchy of Passaic
445 Lackawanna Avenue
Woodland Park, New Jersey 07424

17 August 2018

Glory to Jesus Christ!

The recent revelations and accusations regarding the issue of sexual abuse within the institution of the Catholic Church are most disturbing. These reports of the sexual abuse of children, young people and adults by clergy, and the accusations of a poor and inappropriate response to such issues by Church leadership, both here and abroad, are appropriately a source for great sadness, anger and disappointment. As a local church, the Byzantine Catholic Eparchy of Passaic has pledged itself to dealing honestly and openly with such concerns. Our Office for a Safe Environment in Ministry is absolutely committed to maintaining a safe and healthy environment for all people who make our Church their spiritual home. We are absolutely dedicated to enforcing with vigor the mandates of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People and all particular state child protection laws. Our policy is to assure that all credible accusations of sexual impropriety with children, young people and adults are immediately reported to police authorities and appropriate civil agencies. For any questions or concerns regarding the ministry of our office please call 732.280.2682.

Respectfully in Christ our God,

Father Dave

(Fr.) David J. Baratelli, Ed.S., M.Div.

Coordinator
The Office for a Safe Environment in Ministry



SAINT NICHOLAS PILGRIMAGE

By Reader Paul Varchola West; More photos to come in future issue...

On the eve of the Feast of the Transfiguration, a sizable crowd of pilgrims journeyed from all over the Eparchy of Passaic to attend the annual Saint Nicholas Pilgrimage held at Carpathian Village in Cresco, PA. This year, the pilgrimage at the Saint Nicholas Shrine saw the convergence of several significant events. There was the pilgrimage itself. Furthermore, the pilgrimage coincided with the annual Altar Server Congress held at the same site. To make the day even more rewarding, the Saint Nicholas Pilgrimage also saw two eparchial seminarians tonsured to minor orders and six diaconal candidates ordained to the subdiaconate!

The day began with a Moleben to Saint Nicholas, the patron of the shrine. As pilgrims arrived, they received a customary blessing and would journey to the shrine as the Moleben was being prayed. From the cantor's stand, I was able to watch the crowd continually grow, and hear the singing become fuller and richer, as the Moleben progressed. This was truly a beautiful sight. The Moleben was followed by a Panachida prayed for all the clergy and pilgrims who have fallen asleep in the Lord. Throughout the day, pilgrims were afforded the opportunity to walk the shrine grounds, socialize with old friends, find quiet places to pray privately and to participate in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Additionally, the service of Holy Anointing was prayed, adding a tone of reflective holiness to the day as pilgrims approached one by one to receive the anointing.

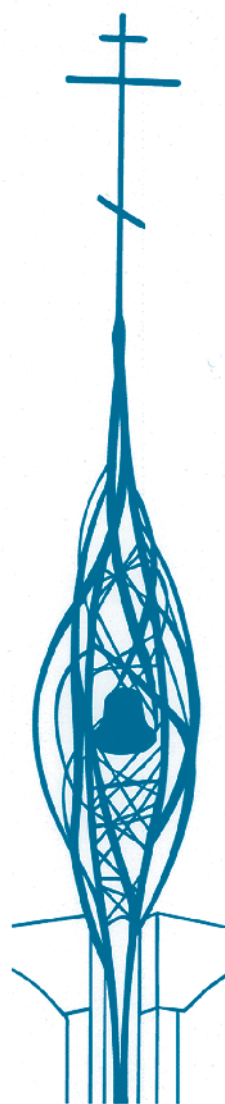
Of course, all this praying made everyone rather hungry, pilgrims and clergy alike! Thankfully, a wonderful lunch, courtesy of the eparchy, was provided for all these hungry guests. The food was catered by Velma's, a local restaurant located on nearby Sand Spring Drive. I would be remiss if I did not mention that Chef Justin Miller, owner of Velma's, was personally at the pilgrimage making sure everyone was taken care of. Everyone was certainly thankful for his service on such a hot and humid day! It was also very nice to see parishioners from the local Saint Nicholas parish in Mount Pocono volunteering to help with the food service.

Of course, the highlight of the day was the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy at which Bishop Kurt ordained the men mentioned above to various Minor Orders. The Ordination to Order of Reader consists of three stages. First, one receives a lighted candle that they may shine forth with the Light of Christ. Next, the candidate must chant a Troparion. Finally, the candidate has the hair on his head snipped in the form of a cross (the Tonsure) and is presented with the Book of Apostolic Readings that he may chant the Epistle. Once this is concluded, the candidate receives the designation to the Order of Reader as the congregation sings "Axios!" affirming the ordination. The subdiaconal ordination is less complex and consists of the candidate washing the hands

of the bishop by pouring water over his hands while exclaiming, "All you faithful" three times. The subdiaconal ordination is then complete later in the liturgy when, during the singing of the Cherubic Hymn, the subdeacon washes the hands of the bishop again in his first liturgical act as subdeacon. These ordinations were witnessed by the pilgrims and twenty altar servers attending the congress and proved to be rewarding for all. This beautiful liturgy included a reflective homily by Bishop Kurt and was concluded with the blessing of fruit in anticipation the Feast of the Transfiguration as well as special prayers for the victims of the California wildfires. Having been a participant in this liturgy, I must it was truly a wonderful site to see so many of the faithful of the Eparchy of Passaic joined together in prayer.

On a personal note, I must say that this day was very special for me as I was blessed to receive ordination to the Order of Reader during the Altar Server Congress, the very same gathering of altar servers at Carpathian Village that I attended when I was a young altar server. During the ordination, as I looked at the front pew to see a full row of young men, attendees of the Altar Server Congress, I was filled with a sense of amazement as I thought of the ten or so years I spent as an altar server and how foundational those years were for me. I pray that the day's events inspire those young hearts to continue to follow Christ and to dedicate their lives to serving His Church in one way or another.

Finally, thank you to Bishop Kurt for encouraging, sponsoring and supporting such a wonderful event as the Saint Nicholas Pilgrimage. Thank you to Father Michael Salnicko for his tireless efforts to prepare the grounds for the pilgrims and for his efforts in cleaning up from the massive snow storm that hit hard in the region this past winter. Thank you to Chef Justin for lending his time and talent. Thank you to all those who helped behind the scenes to make this event happen and to all the pilgrims who journeyed from many parishes to attend. To those men ordained to Reader and Subdeacon: *Axios!* and *Mnohaja L'ita!*



Visiting New York City?

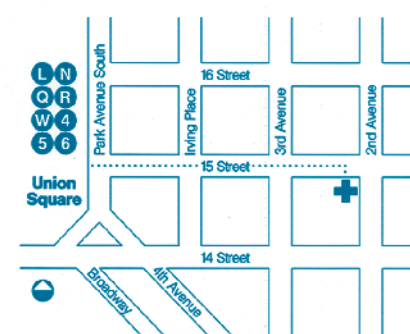
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NEW BYZANTINE CATHOLIC COMMUNITY FORMING IN GREATER CHARLOTTE, NC, AREA

Divine Liturgy on Saturdays at 4 PM: September 1, 8, 15, 22, 29

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, celebrated Liturgy at the end of October and is

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 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. The website <https://carolinabyzantine.com/> will be coming soon – please check that out for news, upcoming gatherings, and service times.

BISHOP’S APPEAL 2017 – FINAL REPORT

Highlighted parishes reached their goal and received a 40% refund

Parish	Location	Goal	Received
Saint John the Baptist Byzantine Catholic Church	Trumbull, CT	\$15,400.00	\$4,950.00
Saint Nicholas Byzantine Catholic Church	Danbury, CT	\$7,000.00	\$2,335.00
Saint Nicholas Byzantine Catholic Church	Meriden, CT	\$800.00	\$840.00
Holy Trinity Byzantine Catholic Church	New Britain, CT	\$4,800.00	\$4,800.00
Saint Gregory of Nyssa Byzantine Catholic Church	Beltsville, MD	\$5,400.00	\$8,790.00
Saint Therese Byzantine Catholic Church	Saint Petersburg, FL	\$10,600.00	\$11,965.00
Saint John the Baptist Byzantine Catholic Church	Bayonne, NJ	\$3,000.00	\$2,000.00
Saint Elias Byzantine Catholic Church	Carteret, NJ	\$4,400.00	\$4,450.00
Saint Nicholas Byzantine Catholic Church	Dunellen, NJ	\$4,000.00	\$2,275.00
Saint Mary Byzantine Catholic Church	Jersey City, NJ	\$3,000.00	\$1,265.00
Saint George Byzantine Catholic Church	Linden, NJ	\$8,000.00	\$2,065.00
Holy Spirit Byzantine Catholic Church	Mahwah, NJ	\$2,600.00	\$3,325.00
Saint Mary Byzantine Catholic Church	Hillsborough, NJ	\$30,000.00	\$10,524.00
Saint George Byzantine Catholic Church	Newark, NJ	\$2,400.00	\$1,125.00
Saint Joseph Byzantine Catholic Church	New Brunswick, NJ	\$3,400.00	\$3,900.00
Saints Peter & Paul Byzantine Catholic Church	Somerset, NJ	\$2,600.00	\$2,600.00
Cathedral of St. Michael the Archangel	Passaic, NJ	\$25,200.00	\$28,555.00
Saint Michael Byzantine Catholic Church	Perth Amboy, NJ	\$4,000.00	\$1,670.00
Saint Nicholas Byzantine Catholic Church	Perth Amboy, NJ	\$4,000.00	\$1,285.00
Saints Peter & Paul Byzantine Catholic Church	Phillipsburg, NJ	\$3,000.00	\$3,680.00
Saint Thomas the Apostle Byzantine Catholic Church	Rahway, NJ	\$12,400.00	\$12,610.00
Saint Nicholas Byzantine Catholic Church	Roebbling, NJ	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00
Assumption of the Virgin Mary Byzantine Catholic Church	Trenton, NJ	\$10,000.00	\$10,050.00
Holy Spirit Byzantine Catholic Church	Binghamton, NY	\$12,000.00	\$4,645.00
Saints Peter & Paul Byzantine Catholic Church	Endicott, NY	\$4,000.00	\$4,030.00
Saints Peter & Paul Byzantine Catholic Church	Granville, NY	\$800.00	\$1,860.00
Holy Cross Byzantine Catholic Church	New York, NY	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00
Saint Mary Byzantine Catholic Church	New York, NY	\$5,000.00	\$5,940.00
Saints Peter & Paul Byzantine Catholic Church	Peekskill, NY	\$3,400.00	\$6,100.00
Saint Nicholas Byzantine Catholic Church	White Plains, NY	\$5,000.00	\$2,100.00
Saint Michael Byzantine Catholic Church	Allentown, PA	\$10,000.00	\$10,244.00
Saints Peter & Paul Byzantine Catholic Church	Beaver Meadows, PA	\$16,000.00	\$16,910.00
Saints Peter & Paul Byzantine Catholic Church	Bethlehem, PA	\$17,000.00	\$21,063.00
Saint Mary Byzantine Catholic Church	Brockton, PA	\$2,000.00	\$270.00
Blessed Virgin Mary Byzantine Catholic Church	Coatesville, PA	\$4,000.00	\$425.00
Saint Michael Byzantine Catholic Church	Dunmore, PA	\$12,000.00	\$6,585.00
Saint John the Baptist Byzantine Catholic Church	Forest City, PA	\$4,000.00	\$1,235.00
Saint Mary Byzantine Catholic Church	Freeland, PA	\$15,000.00	\$15,000.00
Saint Ann Byzantine Catholic Church	Harrisburg, PA	\$16,000.00	\$12,560.00
Saint John the Baptist Byzantine Catholic Church	Hazleton, PA	\$18,400.00	\$6,685.00
Saint Mary Byzantine Catholic Church	Hazleton, PA	\$12,000.00	\$6,855.00
Holy Ghost Byzantine Catholic Church	Jessup, PA	\$13,000.00	\$3,510.00
Saint Mary Byzantine Catholic Church	Kingston, PA	\$8,800.00	\$5,205.00
Saint John the Baptist Byzantine Catholic Church	Lansford, PA	\$5,000.00	\$1,825.00
Our Lady of Perpetual Help Byzantine Catholic Church	Levittown, PA	\$7,800.00	\$4,075.00
Saint Michael Byzantine Catholic Church	McAdoo, PA	\$10,200.00	\$2,950.00
Saint Mary Byzantine Catholic Church	Mahanoy City, PA	\$10,000.00	\$2,585.00
Saints Peter & Paul Byzantine Catholic Church	Minersville, PA	\$14,000.00	\$6,030.00
Saint Michael Byzantine Catholic Church	Mont Clare, PA	\$8,000.00	\$4,355.00
Saint Mary Byzantine Catholic Church	Nesquehoning, PA	\$3,000.00	\$3,100.00
Saint Nicholas Byzantine Catholic Church	Old Forge, PA	\$8,200.00	\$3,675.00
Saints Peter & Paul Byzantine Catholic Church	Palmerton, PA	\$1,000.00	\$275.00
Holy Ghost Byzantine Catholic Church	Philadelphia, PA	\$7,800.00	\$3,060.00
Holy Trinity Byzantine Catholic Church	Philadelphia, PA	\$3,000.00	\$1,980.00
Saint Michael Byzantine Catholic Church	Pittstown, PA	\$8,200.00	\$2,115.00
Saint John the Baptist Byzantine Catholic Church	Pottstown, PA	\$13,800.00	\$1,445.00
Saint Mary Byzantine Catholic Church	Saint Clair, PA	\$3,200.00	\$3,525.00
Saint John the Baptist Byzantine Catholic Church	Scranton, PA	\$3,200.00	\$285.00
Saint Mary Byzantine Catholic Church	Scranton, PA	\$6,600.00	\$5,000.00
Saint Mary Byzantine Catholic Church	Sheppton, PA	\$2,000.00	\$2,100.00
Saint Nicholas Byzantine Catholic Church	Swoyersville, PA	\$7,400.00	\$3,535.00
Saint Mary Byzantine Catholic Church	Taylor, PA	\$3,400.00	\$690.00
Saint Mary Byzantine Catholic Church	Wilkes-Barre, PA	\$19,800.00	\$9,535.00
Saint John the Baptist Byzantine Catholic Church	Wilkes-Barre Tw., PA	\$5,800.00	\$2,875.00
Saint Basil Byzantine Catholic Church	Miami, FL	\$6,800.00	\$490.00
Resurrection Byzantine Catholic Church	Smithtown, NY	\$8,800.00	\$4,650.00
Nativity of Our Lord Byzantine Catholic Church	East Brunswick, NJ	\$4,200.00	\$1,110.00
Holy Wisdom Byzantine Catholic Church	Flanders, NJ	\$1,600.00	\$3,060.00
Patronage of the Mother of God Byzantine Catholic Church	Arbutus, MD	\$9,800.00	\$5,470.00
Epiphany of Our Lord Byzantine Catholic Church	Annandale, VA	\$19,800.00	\$20,270.00
Our Lady of Perpetual Help Byzantine Catholic Church	Toms River, NJ	\$9,800.00	\$5,334.00
Saint Nicholas of Myra Byzantine Catholic Church	Orlando, FL	\$8,600.00	\$6,920.00
Saint Andrew the Apostle Byzantine Catholic Church	Westbury, NY	\$3,200.00	\$4,230.00
Saint Nicholas Chapel	Pocono Summit, PA	\$3,600.00	\$2,855.00
Epiphany of Our Lord Byzantine Catholic Church	Roswell, GA	\$10,800.00	\$5,975.00
All Saints Byzantine Catholic Church	North Fort Myers, FL	\$3,000.00	\$2,275.00
Holy Dormition Byzantine Catholic Church	Ormond Beach, FL	\$3,800.00	\$3,183.35
Saint Anne Byzantine Catholic Church	New Port Richey, FL	\$4,200.00	\$4,200.00
Ascension of Our Lord Church Byzantine Catholic Church	Williamsburg, VA	\$6,800.00	\$3,320.00
Our Lady of the Sign Church Byzantine Catholic Church	Coconut Creek, FL	\$6,200.00	\$6,200.00
Our Lady of Perpetual Help Byzantine Catholic Church	Virginia Beach, VA	\$3,200.00	\$905.00
Saints Cyril & Methodius Byzantine Catholic Church	Fort Pierce, FL	\$6,000.00	\$1,000.00
Saints Cyril & Methodius Byzantine Catholic Church	Cary, NC	\$10,000.00	\$1,810.00
Epiphany of Our Lord Byzantine Catholic Mission	Gaithersburg, MD	\$6,000.00	\$6,350.00
Blessed Basil Hopko Byzantine Catholic Mission	Conway, SC	\$600.00	\$1,700.00
Miscellaneous Donors			\$5,507.00
TOTAL GOAL:		\$636,600	\$422,110.35

How Am I Going To Serve?

A reflection on Diaconal Formation by Jonathan Deane, Eparchy of Phoenix

How am I going to serve? The word deacon (diaconos) in Greek means servant, and so this question is well worth asking for a man discerning a call to the diaconate. This question of how we are going to serve vividly entered the minds of the 13

gave our best to serve. It was make or break time, and spoiler alert: we all passed!

In many ways, this practicum examination on how we are going to serve was the culmination of the last four years. We had studied in the three previous summers

our very poignant charge to be the salt of the earth at the completion of Dr. Sandra Collins' lectures again pointed us towards the end possibility of being ordained as a Byzantine Catholic deacon. From a broad course perspective, all of our assignments,

the bishop will echo in our hearts when he proclaims at ordination, "Divine Grace, which always heals what is infirm and supplies what is lacking..." When I look back to these four years, and indeed my whole life, I can answer the question of how it



Diaconal candidates from the Eparchy of Passaic in the Deacon Formation Program

men in the Diaconal Formation Program at the Byzantine Catholic Seminary of Saints Cyril and Methodius on one unforgettable night. It was June 22, 2018. We had received hours and hours of training in liturgical practicum from Father Robert Pipta, rector of the seminary. On that night it was our chance to execute, and we all knew that close attention would be placed on how we were going to serve. We had drawn a number at random, and that number stood for our order in line to practice serving as a deacon in the Presanctified Liturgy. We went from start to finish through the liturgy with no comments on whether we were standing facing the wrong direction, using the wrong melody, and the like. How am I going to serve? What am I going to intone? Where do I stand, exactly? These questions multiplied as the 13 men in diaconal formation took the Liturgical Practicum exam on that Friday night. As each of us had our numbers called, that daunting question went from a murmur in our minds to a roar. How am I going to serve? We all had our fair try to play our role serving as deacons, and we all watched Father Robert take notes for a few minutes after each of us

about the foundations of our faith: dogmatics, liturgy, scripture, moral theology, pastoral theology, canon law, history and the like. This summer we really focused on that question in a new way: How am I going to serve? Our practicum not only put us in the place of serving the Church liturgically, we also thought about pastoral realities of serving, such as visiting the sick and home bound, and what that broader service may look like. Engaging with foundations in our first years was critical, but we also looked this year on the most recent council of the Catholic Church, Vatican II which is another foundation for our future service. We asked hard questions—not only about our vision of who we are as Eastern Catholics in documents such as *Orientalium Ecclesiarum* and *Unitatis Redintegratio*, but we also asked fundamental questions about who we are as faithful and clergy in other texts such as *Lumen Gentium* and *Gaudium et Spes*. Our moral theology class focused towards the end of things on a personal level in that we considered dying and death. Our last two scriptural courses completed our studies on the Bible's ending with studies on the Book of Revelation, and



Father John Petro (first row center), director of the program, with staff and students of the Deacon Formation Program

lectures and discussions pointed us to again ask: how am I going to serve?

Even in our chats with each other as brothers during meals or at night after our 14-hour day ended, our discussions of challenges and blessings seemed to show that we were all focused on answering that question of how we are going to serve. The realities of potential ordination in the future came to an acute focus for us with the announcement of plans for diaconal ordination of our elder brother from the Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of Stamford, who heard from his bishop that he was called to ordination to the diaconate on July 8, 2018.

Stepping back, asking the question of how we are going to serve is an even more basic one. With our unique gifts as 13 very diverse men, we must beseech the Lord: *what will our focus be in terms of serving Christ and his Church?* With our own weaknesses and areas to grow in Christ, we have also asked ourselves how we are going to serve when we have fallen short. I believe that if God is to call any of us to be ordained to the diaconate, those words from

is that I will serve with those words from the ordination service and answer that it is through the grace of God that we all find our meaning and strength to live in Christ. I do not know if I will be ordained to the diaconate, nor the fates of the other 12 men in formation, but I know that spending this time in reflection has been a blessing for us because of the constant reminder that it is divine grace that will heal all of us in Christ.

On behalf of the 13 men who went for our fourth and final summer of diaconal formation, thank you to all of you in the Church who have supported us on this journey: our Bishops, the formation program staff, pastors, spiritual directors, wives, children, grandchildren, other family, especially our parish families. We look particularly to this last group and are asking: How are we going to serve? We will serve through the grace of God and by living our calling to love God and our neighbor in the specific calling that He has for us. We love our Byzantine Catholic tradition and more importantly want to be those who are servants (*diakonoi*) for all of you, if this is what God wills. *Glory to Jesus Christ!*



LIFE, LOVE, AND THE HUMAN PERSON

By Ann M. Koshute, MTS

I'LL HAVE WHAT *THEY'RE* HAVING

Travelling is good for the spirit. New scenery, interesting people, and renewed appreciation for God's creation and our place in it refresh us and offer opportunities for God to speak to us in powerful ways. That's what happened to me a few months ago during a girls' getaway to New York. I spent the weekend with two friends in Brooklyn, and though it was early June, the weather was exceptionally hot and humid. Our hotel was one block from an old Roman Catholic parish, and we strolled there in the considerably cooler Sunday morning weather. As it happened, that morning a group of children were making their First Communion. Family members beamed as their little ones processed to the

front of the small church, the girls like princesses in white dresses, and the boys like little men in suits. The priest gave a beautiful homily on the Eucharist, speaking in simple yet moving terms about God's love and His desire for an intimate union with us. His words were directed as much toward the adults – some of whom likely hadn't darkened the door of a church in a while – as they were for the children. By the end of the Liturgy, I experienced a genuine sense of "fullness," having been fed by the Word and by the Body and Blood of Christ.

After church we had enough time to get breakfast, check out and make it back into Manhattan to catch our bus home. A quick

internet search found a diner not far from the church, and we walked the few blocks to get there. We approached the diner and saw a line of people (men and women of all races and ages) circling the block. Fearing that we'd never get a table in what looked to be a very popular eatery, and feeling a light yet steady rain on us, we checked our watches and debated our next move. Then I noticed that the line moved well passed the diner's entrance. As we approached, the line broke and we walked into a restaurant of mostly empty tables. We were quickly seated, joking with the host that we thought it must be some breakfast, judging by the line of people. He laughed and said, "Pretty soon we'll be full." Sure enough, within ten minutes

hungry people streamed in, and the line that flowed out the window past our booth began moving quickly. We were fascinated by the sheer number of people outside, and their diversity, wondering what drew so many at 10 o'clock on a Sunday morning. My friend looked out the window and found the answer: The Brooklyn Tabernacle, a large non-denominational church devoted to prayer, community outreach and, according to its website, "interceding for needs from around the world." By the time our breakfast was delivered to us the flow of people past our window picked up its pace, and in a few moments, they'd disappeared into the old stone building. We fed our stomachs while the hundreds of

people we watched file past us moved out of the rain and into the morning's second service, searching for another kind of food.

Though my friends and I talked a bit about the “phenomenon” we’d just witnessed before reviewing our weekend adventures, the experience stayed with me. That morning I’d not only worshipped as part of my weekly routine, but I’d witnessed a group of children encounter the living God in the flesh for the very first time. That liturgy and the Holy Mystery the children and congregation participated in was a miraculous, life-giving gift, given freely and gratuitously; a gift I’m offered every week – *every day*, if I want it. The tiny church was nearly full, and there was a palpable feeling of joy and thanksgiving. Sadly, our own experience of parish life sometimes leaves us flat, and the joy and awe to be found before the Mysteries contained within seems weak or lacking. Worship can become *routine*, and “all earthly cares” hard to set aside for an hour or two. Added to the personal apathy to which we’re all susceptible is news of evil perpetrated against the most vulnerable in the Church (most recently highlighted by the Pennsylvania Grand Jury Report on clergy sexual abuse) by those for whom the title “Father” is not honorific but is meant to mark their identity as protectors and spiritual providers. Such evil tries the Faithful’s trust in the Church, and in God. Many stay but many also leave, seeking God in other denominations or in a “personal church” of their own making.

Watching so many people waiting an hour or more in the rain to get into the Brooklyn Tabernacle, I reflected anew on my own search for God, and where I fall short or become lazy in my pursuit of Him.

It’s part of our human identity to want to believe God exists, that He knows and loves us, and wants us to know and love Him. The folks waiting to enter the Tabernacle that Sunday are witnesses to that. Who knows how long they’ve been looking for Him – or how many of them had once been Catholic. Something draws them, motivating them to wait their turn to cross the Tabernacle’s threshold to meet the One Whom they seek. What about us, members of the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church? Have we found Him? Do we believe we have the Bread of Life in our midst, and encounter Him in a union of our souls and bodies? Would we wait for as long as it takes, under any circumstances, for that encounter? Are Baptism and Chrismation rituals that “made us Catholic,” or do they animate our life and our relationship with God and each other? Most importantly, if a stranger engaged us in conversation about God and our faith, or stepped into our parish on a Sunday morning, could we give witness to our belief and our love for God? Watching the people waiting to enter the Tabernacle, wondering about each of their stories, I asked myself these questions, and whether *I knew* the gift of God I find in His Church.

If someone saw *you* walking into church, watched you pray the Liturgy, and witnessed your life outside of that one hour a week, would they want what *you’re* having?

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Father Sebastian Carnazzo
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"I think that John's Gospel...is the firstfruits of the Gospels...We might dare say that the Gospels are the firstfruits of all Scripture but that the firstfruits of the Gospels is that according to John whose meaning no one can understand who has not leaned on Jesus' breast or received Mary from Jesus to be his mother also."

– Origen of Alexandria, 184-253, A.D.

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SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES

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

THE PROPHETS: GREATEST HITS

I have recently been added to the walls of Saint Michael Cathedral in Passaic. If your parish has a full iconostasis, you probably have the prophets on the third row (above the Twelve Feasts and the Apostles). Traditionally, each prophet holds an open scroll containing a selection from his message. In most churches, those icons may be too high up to read, however, and the texts are probably in Slavonic. At the Cathedral, they’re in English and they offer the faithful an opportunity to discover how each of the Prophets pointed in some way toward Jesus Christ and His Church hundreds of years

before the Son of God took flesh and dwelt among us. Here are prophetic one-liners chosen for our Cathedral.

King David sings in Psalm 118:22: “The stone which the builders rejected has become the cornerstone.” Jesus Himself quoted this text (Matthew 21:42), which points to His crucifixion and to the establishment of the Church.

David’s son, Solomon, wrote in Proverbs (9:1): “Wisdom has built her house; she has supported it with seven pillars.” The traditional interpretation identifies Wisdom as Jesus Christ (Romans 1) and the house as both the Mother of God and the Church. The seven pillars are the seven sacraments of the Church and the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit.

Several of the Prophets foresaw details of our Lord’s Incarnation. Isaiah (7:14) famously predicted “The Virgin shall conceive and bear a son and call His name Emmanuel.” Micah (5:2) identified the place of Jesus’ birth: “Bethlehem,

from you will come forth to me the one to be ruler of Israel.” In Habakkuk’s prophecy, “God comes from Teman, the Holy One from an overshadowed mountain” (3:3) the word “overshadow” (some modern translations see the place name “Paran” here instead) suggests the Annunciation (Luke 1:35) and Mary’s virginal conception.

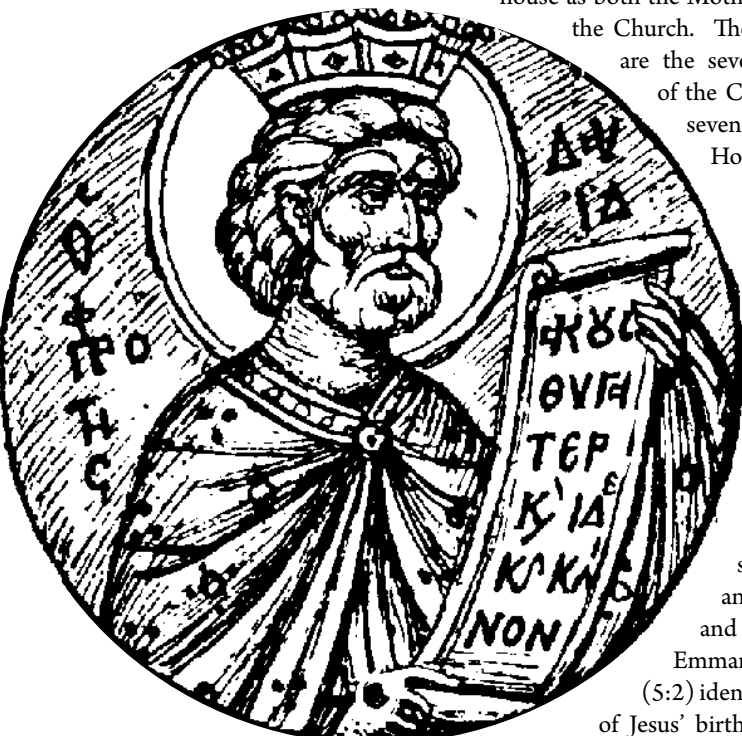
The Prophets pointed to our Lord’s Passion in a variety of ways. Connected with the Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem are Zephaniah’s words: “The King of Israel, the Lord, is in your midst” (3:15) and Malachi’s prediction that “The Lord whom you seek will suddenly come into His temple” (3:1). When Jesus said at the Mystical Supper, “This is my blood of the new covenant” (Matthew 26:28), He was quoting Jeremiah (31:31): “Behold the days are coming says the Lord when I will make a new covenant.” At His trial before the Sanhedrin, Jesus identified Himself by referring to Daniel’s vision (7:13): “Behold: one like a Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven.” Zechariah’s prediction: “They shall look upon Him whom they have pierced” (12:10) was literally fulfilled at Jesus’ Crucifixion (John 19:31-37). Jesus predicted His burial and Resurrection by referring to the “sign of Jonah” who spent three days in the belly of a whale (Matthew 12:39-40). Jonah’s own words, “From the belly of Hades I cried and You heard my voice” describe Jesus’ descent into Hades to break the bonds of death (2:2).

Both Hosea and Amos foreshadowed the Resurrection. Hosea predicted (6:2) “On

the third day, he will raise us up,” referring to Christ’s human nature and another basis for saying that Christ’s three-day resurrection is “according to the Scriptures (1 Corinthians 15:4). God says through Amos (9:11): “I will raise up the tabernacle of David,” which corresponds to Jesus’ similar prediction about “the temple of His body” (John 2:21). Saint James quotes a longer selection from this text with reference to the Resurrection and the establishment of the Church in Acts 15:16-18.

Two prophets in particular looked forward to the descent of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost. Nearly six hundred years before it happened, God promised through Ezekiel (36:26-27): “I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you.” Joel (2:28-29) announced God’s promise: “I will pour out My Spirit upon all flesh.” Saint Peter quoted these words to the amazed crowd that gathered on Pentecost to hear the Apostles speak, bravely and in a variety of languages, about Jesus Christ for the first time.

The message of the four major (Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Daniel) and twelve minor prophets (Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi) is rich and varied and extends over at least four hundred years of Israel’s history. The prophets did not just predict the future. In fact, most of their messages describe how God sees the present, offers His people a choice, and shows them the consequences of being faithful or unfaithful to Him. **ECL**





UNDERSTANDING ICONS

Father Joseph Bertha, Ph.D.

WORLD MEETING OF FAMILIES 2018 ICON

A Theological Reflection

The icon “written” to serve as the emblem of the World Meeting of Families 2018 portrays a profound simultaneous catholic and orthodox kerygmatic preaching about families and ultimately our family of faith, the Church. Two outer panels, show the angelic messengers (actually evangelizers) Archangel Michael and Archangel Gabriel, facing the inner triptych while they hold in their hands orbs emblazoned with the initials of Jesus Christ. When opened they reveal an inner triptych icon; one side depicts Christ raising the daughter of Jairus, the synagogue leader. On the opposite side a panel portrays Our Lord present at the Wedding feast at Cana.

This new icon portrays the Holy Family gathered at the Passover meal. Because of its pivotal position, at the center of the panel, as well as its dramatic location directly behind the main altar at the World Meeting of Families, it links the New Testament Eucharist with its Jewish Passover supper antecedent. The iconographer has also inscribed *Amoris Laetitia* (2016) under this scene connecting it to the Pastoral letter of Pope Francis. This resplendent image is the featured icon offered for the contemplation of the faithful. The entire icon resonates with the richness of revelation of a new unveiling layer of the family dynamic.

fore each of the figures are tallits or Jewish prayer shawls, signifying the sacred nature of the gathering. Unleavened bread, napkin clad condiments (radishes and parsley) and a large goblet filled with wine cover the table.

Our Lord is shown in the central position of the seated figures, He is shown as the Pascha, the New Passover. He wears the clothing of the Resurrection, and not of His usual earthly garb. His chiton is pure white, which represents the baptismal robes worn after death to sin. His gold himation refulges with sparkling golden rays, radiating the Resurrection light piercing the darkness of the underworld.

As the Byzantine church so eloquently articulates throughout the Paschal services, most notably during the Resurrection Matins during the solemn chanting of the Exapostalarion: “You O King and Lord have fallen asleep in the flesh, as a mortal man, but on the third day you arose again. YOU ARE THE PASCH of immortality, you are the salvation of the world.”

This icon shows us is Jesus as the promised Messiah, within the context of His family of faith, both of His Parents, Saint Joseph and the Holy Theotokos, during the Jewish ritual of the Passover seder. On



Icon of the World Meeting of Families 2018

Our Byzantine tradition also imitates this Passover seder at the Holy Supper on Christmas Eve. We gather together as a family at a ritual meal and pray, knowing full well that the Messiah is about to arrive in the cave of a manger in Bethlehem. The culmination of this family gathering is the singing of *God is with us*, as we joyfully proclaim together as a family the arrival of the Newborn Jesus. Afterwards, we gather with our parish family joyfully celebrating the Eucharistic sacrament at the arrival of the New Pasch, our Savior Jesus Christ!

Our Passover journey through this life is fraught with many dangers, such as death by sin. Depicted on the side panels of this icon, Our Lord grants life to Jairus's daughter despite the derision by even the faithful gathered around him. Our Blessed Savior bestows the highest blessing on the sacramental mystery of marriage, by performing his first miracle at the wedding banquet at Cana.

The Old Testament Hebrew image of type or image of the Messiah is frequently described as the arrival of the Bridegroom. And the consecration of the water into wine which has Eucharistic underpinnings as the best has been served at the end of the ban-

quet represents the Kairos, the chosen time by God to send his son.

This all transpires during the context of the family gathering together to celebrate a meal. How often have we heard of the necessity of the family to gather together for meals at home, to put the cell phones down, to look at each other and communicate. Also for the family to gather together for the Eucharistic meal celebrated on the weekends as the context for the renewal, sustenance of our family of faith to receive the nourishment, and the strength to continue amidst the tumults of life.

Ultimately what this magnificent icon provides for our contemplation is a window into the joy of love portrayed by the inner life of the Holy Family. We can see the connection between our Jewish ancestors Passover experience and our own journey of faith on the face of the earth. By joining together in prayer and Eucharist with our families we derive the strength to forgive, sustain and persevere through the earthly sojourn of our life. **ECL**



Close up of the Holy Family

The central scene shows the Holy Family seated at the Passover Seder, the twelve year old Christ Child, the Holy Wisdom of God, with the Holy Theotokos at His right side, while Saint Joseph bows his head and is seated at His left. The tablecloth spread be-

Holy Thursday, celebrated with the family of Apostles, Our Lord shows Himself again as the Pascha as he institutes the Eucharist. Our family of faith gathers to celebrate the Eucharistic meal to commemorate our redemption from death.

St Ann Byzantine Catholic Church

5408 Locust Lane, Harrisburg, PA

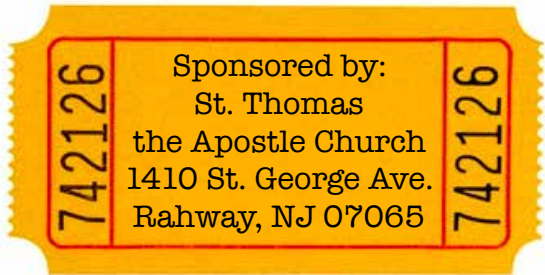
Parish Education Calendar 2018 - 2019

Join the St. Ann Parish family for these upcoming spiritual formation events in 2018-2019:

- “Theosis: Our Earthly Pilgrimage to Heaven.” Prayer and Reflection led by Adriana Schubeck, Chris Russo, and Fr. Vasyl Chepelsky, Saturday October 6, 2018, 10 AM- 2 PM.
- “How Our Mental and Spiritual Health Allow Us to Witness for Jesus.” Prayer and Workshop given by Peter Scheer, MS, NCC, Saturday October 27, 2018, 10 AM- 3 PM.
- Parish Meager Meal & Moleben Prayer Service with speaker each week, Wednesdays December 5, 12, & 19, 2018 starting in the parish hall at 5:30 PM.
- Parish Lenten Reflection given by Fr. John Zeyak: Date TBA.
- Pysanky Workshop: Sunday March 24, 2019. Registration Required.
- “Being the Hands, Feet, and Heart of Jesus.” Sr. Ruth Plante, Provincial, Sisters of St. Basil, Uniontown. Parish Formation Day Retreat: Sunday May 19, 2019 following Divine Liturgy.

All programs take place at St. Ann Byzantine Catholic Church, 5408 Locust Lane, Harrisburg, PA 17109. For more details on events, location, or speakers, please contact the parish office at 717-652-1415.

PARISH TRICKY TRAY AUCTION!



WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 3, 2018

Doors open: **5:00 PM** Drawing: **7:30 PM**
\$10 in advance / \$12 at the door
Handicapped Accessible

Kitchen opens at 5:00 PM
Hamburgers, hot dogs, kielbasa subs, piroghi, stuffed cabbage, chips & pretzels, soda & water available for purchase. Free coffee-tea/cake for dessert with each ticket purchased.



Basket raffles, Lottery Tickets, 50/50, Broadway tickets (Kinky Boots), 32” Smart TV, Jets tickets (4), gift cards, Dyson 10” desk fan, Amazon Echo Show, DeLonghi Coffee Center, and much much more!

Tickets go on sale **August 19th, 2018.**
Contact Barbara: 732.382.2417

Join us for our **47th Annual**

SLAVIC AMERICAN FESTIVAL

Sunday, September 9, 2018
12 Noon til' 6:00 P.M.
Epiphany of Our Lord Byzantine Catholic Church

www.slavicamericanfestival.com



Music by **John Stevens' Doubleshot**

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

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

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

Divine Liturgy Schedule:
Saturday Sept 8th-5pm & Sunday Sept 9th-8:00 & 10:30 am
Free Admission • Free Shuttle parking from 3301 Woodburn Road. No Pets Please



3410 Woodburn Road • Annandale, VA • (703) 573-3986



SCHOOL OF PRAYER
Father G. Scott Boghossian

GOD’S PRAYER BOOK: THE PSALMS

It only stands to reason that the very best prayers we can pray are the prayers composed by the Holy Spirit Himself. The Old Testament book of Psalms is the only prayer book inspired by the Holy Spirit (2 Tim. 3:16). In Hebrew, the title of the book of Psalms is “Tehillim” meaning “Praises.” Sometimes the book of Psalms is referred to as “the Psalms of David” because King David wrote many of them, or simply as the “Psalter.” They have been used by the people of God since ancient times both publicly and privately. From her earliest days, book of Psalms was the official prayer book of the Church.

The earliest monks, the Fathers of the Desert, used the Psalms as their daily prayers. Saint John Cassian tells us that the monks of the Egyptian Desert prayed twelve psalms in the morning and twelve psalms in the evening, being careful to pay close attention to the meaning of the words. In his conflict with the devil, Saint Anthony of Egypt prayed the Psalms. When the demon attacked, he said, “I sang psalms against him, and he vanished away” (Life of Saint Anthony by Saint Athanasius).

The great Church Fathers, both Eastern and Western, urge the faithful to use the Psalms in prayer. Saint Athanasius tells Marcellinus, “Let each one, therefore, who recites the Psalms have a sure hope that through them God will speedily give ear to those who are in need.” Saint Basil the Great writes: “A psalm is a shield against the fears of the night, a rest from toils of the day, a safeguard for infants, an adornment for vigorous youth, a consolation for the elderly. It is the foundation for beginners, the improvement of those advancing, the solid support of the perfect. It is the voice of the Church, brightening feast days; it creates a sorrow which is in accordance with God, for a psalm calls forth a tear even from a

heart of stone. A psalm is the occupation of the angels, heavenly life, spiritual incense” (Homily on Psalm 1).

Saint Ambrose of Milan writes: “In the book of Psalms there is profit for all, with healing power for our salvation... All who read it may find the cure for their own individual failings. All with eyes to see can discover in it a complete gymnasium for the soul, a stadium for all the virtues, equipped for every kind of exercise; it is for each to choose the kind he judges best to help him gain the prize” (Explanation of the Psalms).

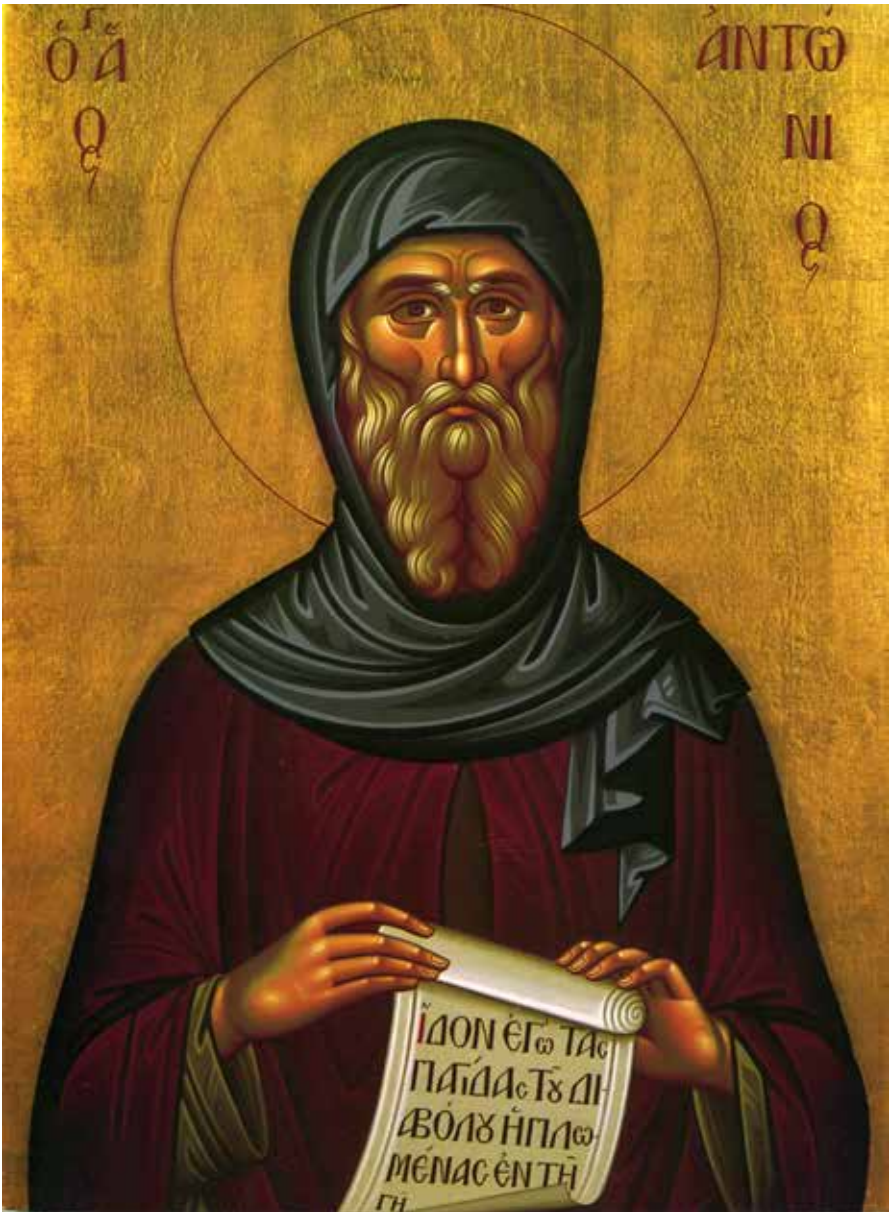
For about a thousand years, from the 500’s to the 1500’s, the entire book of Psalms was recited by clergy and monastics at least once if not twice a week. In the fifth century, Saint Gennadius, the Patriarch of Constantinople, would not ordain a man to the priesthood unless the candidate for ordination could recite the entire Psalter by heart. Many saints prayed the whole book of Psalms every day, and some did so more than once a day. It is the Psalms that make up the heart of the Divine Office, or Divine Praises, prayed by the clergy, monastics, and laity throughout the world.

Catholic Christians make use of prayer books, rosaries, and prayer ropes, and rightfully so. But why not pray the most excellent prayers ever composed, prayers written by God Himself, the prayers of the one hundred and fifty psalms? True, some of the psalms may seem difficult to understand. Some may not seem to apply to the life of a Christian in today’s world, and some must be interpreted mystically or allegorically. Nevertheless, the historic Christian Church, of which we are all members, made the Psalter the center of all prayer.

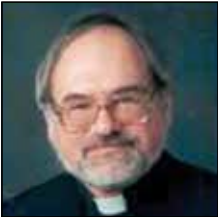
With the great Church Fathers, monastics, clergy, and laity of the past two

thousand years let us return to the book of Psalms as the source of every kind of prayer. The Psalms are prayers of adoration, contrition, thanksgiving, and supplication. Our life journey toward eternal life will be great-

ly enriched as we learn to listen to them, read them, memorize them, meditate on them, and sing them. The Psalms are the only prayer book inspired by God. **ECL**



Icon of Saint Anthony the Great



THE BYZANTINE LITURGY

By Archpriest David Petras, SEOD

IMAGINING THE FUTURE LIFE

We usually think of a good imagination as an asset. If we are able to imagine something, then maybe we can also find a way to make it a reality. Imagination also serves other purposes. It can help us to understand what is real; it can give us a picture, as it is said, that is worth a thousand words; it can also be something beautiful that gives us pleasure; it can also be something terrifying that warns us from certain actions. We compliment people, then, by saying that they have a good imagination, and it is seen as a sign of intelligence. The flip side, however, is that imagination can also deceive us and lead to false ideas about God's reality.

The Syrian theologian that wrote under the name of Dionysius warns about too much imagination in trying to comprehend God, who by his very nature is beyond human understanding. Dionysius wrote, "We must not dare to resort to words or conceptions concerning that hidden divinity which transcends being, apart from what sacred scriptures have divinely revealed." (*The Divine Names* 1,1) We often trip up by inaccurate imaginations of God, that atheists sometimes use to ridicule Christian belief. For example, God is imagined as an old man with a white beard living in the clouds above earth. Christians sometimes play into this by referring to God as "the man upstairs," though God is neither a man, nor upstairs, but instead "present everywhere and filling all things (Hymn to the Holy Spirit).

We believe in life beyond our present earthly life, yet we have a plethora of imaginations about it, most, I think, drawn from Dante's work the *Divine Comedy*. Secular entertainment draws on these sources, and you see heaven depicted as a delightful garden, or dwelling in the clouds playing a harp. Eternal life seems to be eternal boredom, but this comes from the simple fact that as long as we live in space and time, we cannot imagine infinity and eternity. Hell then becomes depicted as an underground cavern with a continually burning fire. Some of these ideas, besides from Dante, may be imported from pagan mythology.

The Syrian Dionysius, however, says that what we do know about God is what has been revealed in Scripture. Jesus does not give us a verbal picture of heaven, but it is described by way of analogy, as dwelling in the bosom of Abraham (Luke 16:22), that there are many mansions (John 14:2), as becoming like the angels in heaven (Mark 12:25). The Book of Revelation contains a vivid symbolic description of the heavenly Jerusalem (21:1-8) Here eternal life is "Behold, God's dwelling is with the human race. He will dwell with them and they will be his people and God himself will always be with them as their God." (v. 21:3) The resurrection of the body is an article of faith, "I expect the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen." (Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed) St. Paul tells us, "So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown corruptible It is

sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body." (1 Corinthians 15:42,44) St. Paul also says, "We look not to what is seen but to what is unseen; for what is seen is transitory, but what is unseen is eternal." (2 Corinthians 4:18) Therefore, it is beyond our imagination. Pope St. John Paul II described heaven, "When the form of this world has passed away, those who have welcomed God into their lives and have sincerely opened themselves to his love, at least at the moment of death, will enjoy that fullness of communion with God which is the goal of human life." (July 21, 1999)

The same is true of eternal punishment. Our Lord often describes eternal punishment as fire (the Parable of Lazarus and the Rich Man, Luke 16:24). He calls it Gehenna, which was the garbage heap outside of Jerusalem that was always burning. The Book of Revelation says, "but as for cowards, the unfaithful, the depraved, murderers, the unchaste, sorcerers, idol-worshippers, and deceivers of every sort, their lot is in the burning pool of fire and sulfur, which is the second death." (v. 21:8) However, note carefully what Jesus said about hell, condemning unrepentant sinners, "Depart from me, you accursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels." If the eternal fire was prepared "for the devil and his angels," then it must be spiritual, for they are not flesh and blood but spirits. Hell, then, is imagined by way of physical metaphors, for it is the extreme pain of separation from God. Again, Pope St. John

Paul II explains, "The images of hell that Sacred Scripture presents to us must be correctly interpreted. They show the complete frustration and emptiness of life without God. Rather than a place, hell indicates the state of those who freely and definitively separate themselves from God, the source of all life and joy." (July 28, 1999)

Unbelievers sometimes point to the Christian faith as "other-worldly," as not being concerned with the life in this world. But this is not true, faith sees everything in the light of the eternal, which gives our whole lives an infinite value. Without the eternal perspective, everything would become unimportant and meaningless, as St. Paul says, "transitory." Indeed, they have not only an infinite value, but all is subject to the righteous judgment of God, as Jesus foretells, "[the Son of Man] will send out his angels with a trumpet blast, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other" (Matthew 24:31), and St. Paul says that the righteous would be justified, "the one who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus and place us with you in his presence." (2 Corinthians 4:14) Yes, even if we claim to be a follower of Christ, we must take care to act rightly in this world, because in truth I have seen that God's judgment, which will be completely fulfilled, begins even in this world. **ECL**

SPIRITUAL REFLECTIONS

Father Lewis Rabayda



THE PATH OF MOST RESISTANCE

One can always take the easy path in life, the path with least resistance as water does. Because this free-flowing water does not stop to figure out a complication in its way. It does not stop the flow or current to contemplate how a rock or tree root or mound of earth can be moved. Rather, the flow of gravity and water will take the path of avoiding obstacles, even if it has to go farther out of its way, just to continue with ease, and without obstruction. Our spiritual life in Christ can be subject to the same pull of gravity, the same pull of natural forces of this world and by the Ruler of This World (the Devil), if we do not allow ourselves to pause and contemplate the obstacles in our lives.

As baptized sons and daughters of God we live in the Body of Christ, in the Body of the Church. And to remain as members of this Body, we have an obligation to maintain ourselves in a way that is quite unnatural and in opposition to the world around us. All through Salvation History, God has called His people to not be like the peoples of the world because they were chosen to be holy. God has called us all to act in ways

that are not natural, but supernatural, to rise above the path of least resistance and to follow a most-difficult, and a most-rewarding path towards the Kingdom of Heaven.

But how does one know if they are truly on this difficult path and not taking every easy turn that is offered to them? The world suggests that we "follow our conscience," but the Church, our Body, suggests that we can only properly follow our conscience if it has been well formed, or well conformed to the mind of Christ, and to the life of Christ. In order for us to know the state of our conscience, we must take the necessary time to stop and reflect on our thoughts and actions. This reflection should compare our own thoughts and actions with those of Christ that we read in Holy Scripture. What is Jesus saying? What is Jesus *not* saying? What is Jesus doing? How is He interacting with others, especially those in need, those who offend Him, those who look for repentance? How does He instruct people to rise above their sins? How does Jesus care for those who have been entrusted to Him? This may be the ultimate question, which may have an all encompassing answer, "You

shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself" (Luke 10:27).

The older we get, the odds are greater that we have people entrusted to us in different capacities. We have friends who rely on us, coworkers who count on us, children who need to be guided, parents who need to be cared for, subordinates who need to be instructed, and the people of God—the Body of Christ—that needs to be fed the Word of God and the Flesh and Blood of Christ. We see from Jesus' example that He did not become a man to have people serve Him, or to satisfy His needs or desires; Jesus became a man to raise all of mankind up to heaven with Him at His glorious resurrection.

But even Jesus Christ, the Son of God, did not plow through life without reflection or contemplation. Before Jesus began His ministry He entered the desert to pray and fast for forty days and He withstood all temptations from the Devil himself. He often would take time away from His apostles

and disciples to pray. Even before His unjust trial and crucifixion, Jesus prayed to His Father asking that this most difficult task of self-sacrifice might be avoided. But during His prayer and plea for an alternate way, Jesus submitted to His Father's will, rather than His own desires. And by His submission to His Father, to Our Father, all sin has been taken away for those who believe in Jesus Christ and for those who partake of His Body and Blood.

But we must stop and contemplate our current thoughts and actions to see if they are still in line with those of Christ or if they have fallen out of line to the path of least resistance. If our thoughts and actions are not in line with Christ, then death will come. But it may not only come for us, but also for those who we fail to show the true path of salvation to. We have been shown the way of most-resistance, the supernatural way, the path that leads to eternal salvation and to the Kingdom of Heaven for those who accept it. Let us not keep it to ourselves, but let us share it with those rely on us for guidance. **ECL**

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

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

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

The Passion Play of Oberammergau

11 DAYS

AUGUST 31 – SEPTEMBER 10, 2020

Hosted by:
FATHER EDWARD CIMBALA AND FATHER JAMES SPERA

\$4099 PER PERSON FROM NEWARK

An opportunity that arises once every ten years is an opportunity not to be missed. A theatrical tradition since 1634, the world-famous Oberammergau Passion Play is a much-anticipated reenactment of the crucifixion of Christ – from His entry into Jerusalem to the Resurrection – performed only once a decade in the quaint Bavarian village of Oberammergau. The town vowed that if God were to spare them from the effects of the bubonic plague ravaging the region, they would perform a play every ten years depicting the life and death of Jesus. The play, involves over 2,000 performers, musicians, and stage technicians, all of whom are residents of the village.

In addition to experiencing the magnificent Passion Play our tour will take us to one of the most beautiful parts of the world: Switzerland, Austria, and Germany. Whether visiting medieval towns, driving through the breathtaking Alps or simply relaxing at a sidewalk café, we will experience the unique atmosphere of this region and its people.

Some highlights of the tour include visits to Heidelberg, the oldest university town in Germany; Lucerne, with its beautiful 14th and 15th century covered bridges; Innsbruck and Salzburg (The Sound of Music City), two picture postcard cities situated in the Austrian Alps; Munich, the capital of Bavaria; and Rothenburg, Germany’s best preserved medieval town.

The price of our tour includes roundtrip airfare, government taxes and airline fuel surcharges, first class select hotels, most

meals, the services of a professional tour director, and sightseeing in a deluxe motor-coach.

Father Ed Cimbala and Father James Spera look forward to having you join them on this trip of a lifetime. It promises to be a wonderful experience for all with time to enjoy the fellowship of old friends and new.

While August, 2020, may seem a long way away, NOW is the time to make plans and reserve your place on the tour as space

is limited. Don’t miss out on this opportunity to experience the history and culture in one of the most scenic areas of Europe!

For more information or to request a brochure, please contact Father Ed Cimbala at 908-872-2928 or by email – Fredcimbala@gmail.com.



SEASONAL REFLECTIONS

Father Ronald Hatton



“WE BOW TO YOUR CROSS...”

I think it is rather moving that the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross falls on a Friday this year. We fast every Friday throughout the year since every Friday is a memorial of Good Friday, just as every Sunday is a memorial of Easter Sunday. So it is that we honor and exalt the cross of our Lord on “the day” of His crucifixion. This should make us all the more aware of what took place on that cross and praise our Lord for opening the door to salvation for us. “Joy to you, life-bearing Cross of the Lord, invincible triumph of the true faith. **You are the gate to Paradise**, the strength of the faithful, and the stronghold of the Church. Because of you, corruption no longer has meaning nor power. By you we have been lifted up from earth to heaven. You are an invincible weapon against evil, a glory indeed for saints and martyrs, and a haven for salvation. You are the source of mercy to the world.” (Vespers, Aposticha for the Feast)

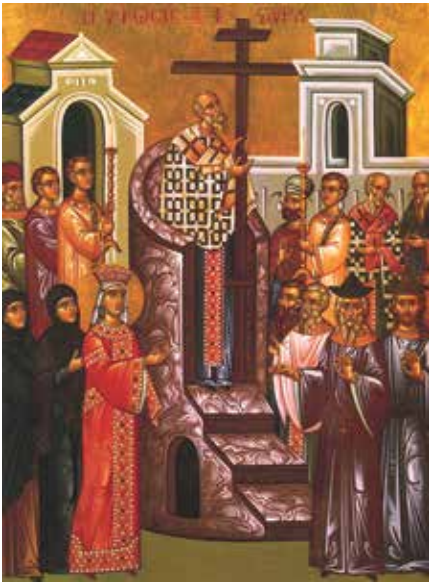
Our services for this feast bring home the fact that, although we are celebrating the discovery of the True Cross by St. Helena, we are really celebrating the salvation that comes through that cross. “O most

venerable Cross of the Lord, the angels surround you with joy at your elevation today. You raise up those who had fallen and had been delivered from death for having eaten of the forbidden tree. Therefore, we praise you with our lips, begging for sanctification, saying: Exalt Christ our gracious God, O you nations, and adore His divine footsteps forever.” (Vespers, “At Psalm 140”). We are also presented with the Cross as the Tree of Life in juxtaposition of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. In Genesis 2:9 it is written: “Also, in the middle of the garden were the tree of life and the tree of learning the knowledge of good and evil.” Verse 17 relates that God says to Adam, “...but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you may not eat; for in whatever day you eat from it, you shall die by death.” Instead of eating of the Tree of Life, Adam and Eve sinned by preferring the knowledge of good and evil over life itself. In verses 22 and 23, God says: “Behold, the man has become like one of Us, to know good and evil. Now, lest he put out his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever—” “therefore the Lord God sent him out of the garden of pleasure....” In contrast then, we see that

the Tree of the Cross, through which we receive forgiveness, salvation, and eternal life, is the same as the tree of life in the garden. And it is through the voluntary death of Christ on the Cross that He conquers sin, corruption and death, and gives to those who believe that everlasting life that was denied us in the garden. It brings sharper focus the words recorded for us between the one criminal and Jesus as they hung on their crosses: “Then he said to Jesus, ‘Lord, remember me when You come into Your kingdom.’ And Jesus said to him, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise.’” (Luke 23:42-43). Through his act of repentance and prayer to our Lord, the Cross of Christ became his gate to salvation! And so it is with us who believe. If we ask for forgiveness and repent, the Cross becomes our gate to Paradise.

With all this, the Feast of the Exaltation of the Cross should take on a deeper meaning. At our liturgies for the feast, the priest, in imitation of the Patriarch of Jerusalem, elevates the cross and blesses the four corners of the earth, consecrating the whole world to God. When we see this elevation take place, it should strike such awe in our

hearts that we rededicate ourselves to following Christ, receive the blessing given to us by the cross, and allow Him to strip off the gown of sinfulness and garb us with the gown of righteousness. “We bow to Your Cross, O Lord, and we glorify Your holy resurrection.” “Save Your people, O Lord, and bless Your inheritance; grant victory to Your Church over her enemies and protect Your people by Your Cross.” **ECL**



Icon of the Elevation of the Cross

When traveling to the south this winter please visit our churches

All Saints
10291 Bayshore Road
North Fort Myers, FL 33917
1-239-599-4023

Saint Anne
7120 Massachusetts Ave.
New Port Richey, FL 34653
1-727-849-1190

Epiphany of Our Lord
2030 Old Alabama Road
Roswell, GA 30076
1-770-993-0973

Saint Basil the Great
1475 N.E. 199th Street
Miami, FL 33179-5162
1-305-651-0991

Holy Dormition
17 Buckskin Lane
Ormond Beach, FL 32174
1-386-677-8704

Saints Cyril and Methodius
1002 Bahama Avenue
Fort Pierce, FL 34982
1-772-595-1021

Our Lady of the Sign
7311 Lyons Road
Coconut Creek, FL 33073
1-954-429-0056

Saint Nicholas of Myra
5135 Sand Lake Road
Orlando, FL 32819
1-407-351-0133

Saint Therese
4265 13th Avenue North
Saint Petersburg, FL 33713
1-727-323-4022



SEMINARIAN REFLECTIONS

Reader Paul Varchola West

200,000 MILES...AND COUNTING!

August 5, 2018, was a significant day for both my family and me as that was the day I was tonsured and ordained to Minor Orders. The following day, August 6, 2018, would also prove to be a significant day in its own sentimental way. On our way back to Pittsburgh from Carpathian Village, traveling westbound on Rt. 80, my little 2004 Honda Accord hit 200,000 miles! Yes, my wife safely took pictures of the odometer while I drove! This is significant for me for many reasons, but primarily because I can remember exactly when I was driving this very same car when it hit 100,000 miles. I was driving northbound on Interstate 5 in Los Angeles, otherwise

known as “The 5” in the vernacular of Southern California. It was a typical LA day: bright sun, sparse clouds, and lots of traffic. I remember thinking how significant it is for a car to reach 100,000 miles. Little did I know that nearly nine years later, and another 100,000 miles traveled, that I would still be driving the same car, let alone that I would be traveling this journey toward priestly ordination.

As I drove, and the miles on the odometer began to ever so quickly climb from 200,000, I began to reminisce about all that has happened in 100,000 miles. That’s a long way to have traveled. I began thinking

about all the twists and turns of my life, all the joy, all the sorrow, all the stumbles and falls, and most importantly, I looked in my rear-view mirror and saw my two beautiful children sitting in their car seats playing with each other in that little two door Honda. As my eyes began to well up, of course a song popped into my head that almost made me lose all control of the tears just waiting to burst forth into the world. The song was “Pony,” by the legendary singer-songwriter and champion of the traveling and downtrodden, Tom Waits. In this song about a man who has seemingly traveled all over the world, only longing to be home, Waits laments in the closing verse:

*I run my race with Burnt-Face Jake
I gave him a Manzanita cross
I lived on nothin’ but dreams and
train smoke
Somehow my watch and chain got lost
I wish I was home, in Evelyn’s kitchen
With old Gyp curled around my feet*

*I hope my pony
I hope my pony
I hope my pony knows the way back
home*

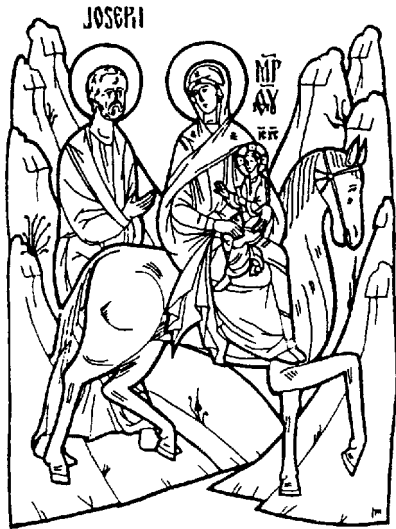
My mind racing, all I could think about was how much I wanted to be home. Here I am, I have not been home since Christmas and I am heading in the opposite direction of the place I called home for 22 years. I am exhausted from two years of seminary and traveling all over, heading toward the start of another two years of formation. I am running on fumes. I feel as if I am living on nothing but dreams and train smoke, not to mention the fact that the watch and chain that Baba gave me when I entered seminary has stopped working! All I want is to be in my parents’ kitchen, drinking a cup of coffee with my mom, sitting next to the window from which we would watch cardinals in the snow when I was a child, but I know very well that my traveling is far from over.

Then I began thinking of Jesus Christ and all the traveling He did in His human life. First off, all this traveling was done on animals, not in a car, just like in the song.

Then, I really got to thinking. I thought of Mary and Joseph, helpless new parents traveling to Egypt with a newborn as refugees. I thought of Christ, traveling to visit Lazarus, knowing what He would be encountering, weeping upon His arrival. I thought of Jesus traveling all over for years teaching and ultimately traveling to Jerusalem only to find Himself in a garden, praying, essentially wanting nothing more to be home with the Father but knowing very well that His traveling was not yet over.

In Christ’s human sorrow, in His travel induced exhaustion, He prayed. I keep reminding myself every day to pray. I remind myself of Christ’s example of turning

THE FLIGHT INTO EGYPT



to prayer in our most vulnerable times. I have found strength, courage, perseverance and renewed sense of purpose through the example of Jesus Christ. Most often these days, I pray that my pony, my little two-door Honda that my dad sold me for a great price ten years ago – now with its jumpy transmission, quirky electrical system, broken radio, sun-bleached seats and leaky weather stripping – holds on for another two years of seminary and travel. Most of all, I pray that my pony, my Honda, knows the way back home. **ECL**

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SEPTEMBER

- 1-2 Annual Pilgrimage in Honor of Our Lady of Perpetual Help
Uniontown, PA
- 3 Labor Day
*Civic holiday * Chancery closed*
- 8 Nativity of the Virgin Theotokos
Solemn Holyday
- 14 Exaltation of the Holy Cross
*Solemn Holyday * Chancery closed*
- 16 Wedding Jubilarians Celebration
Saint Mary Church, Scranton, PA
- 23 Wedding Jubilarians Celebration
Saint Mary Church, Hillsborough, NJ
- 24-27 Eparchial Priests' Retreat
San Alfonso Retreat House, Long Branch

OCTOBER

- 1 Protection of the Theotokos
Launch of Bishop's Appeal 2018