



EASTERN CATHOLIC LIFE

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TO GUIDE OUR FEET IN THE PATH OF PEACE

2021 Christmas Pastoral Message of Bishop Kurt

If you were sitting in a public place and a stranger walked up to you with a smile and announced that he was your new best friend, you would be justifiably cautious, perhaps even a little worried. If the man who walked up to you were someone you recognized from the news media, and if he were someone of surpassing importance and also considered surpassingly kind, you would have very different feelings. Your complex emotions would be drawn from the pallet of wonder, awe, expectation, and joy, not to mention mystification.

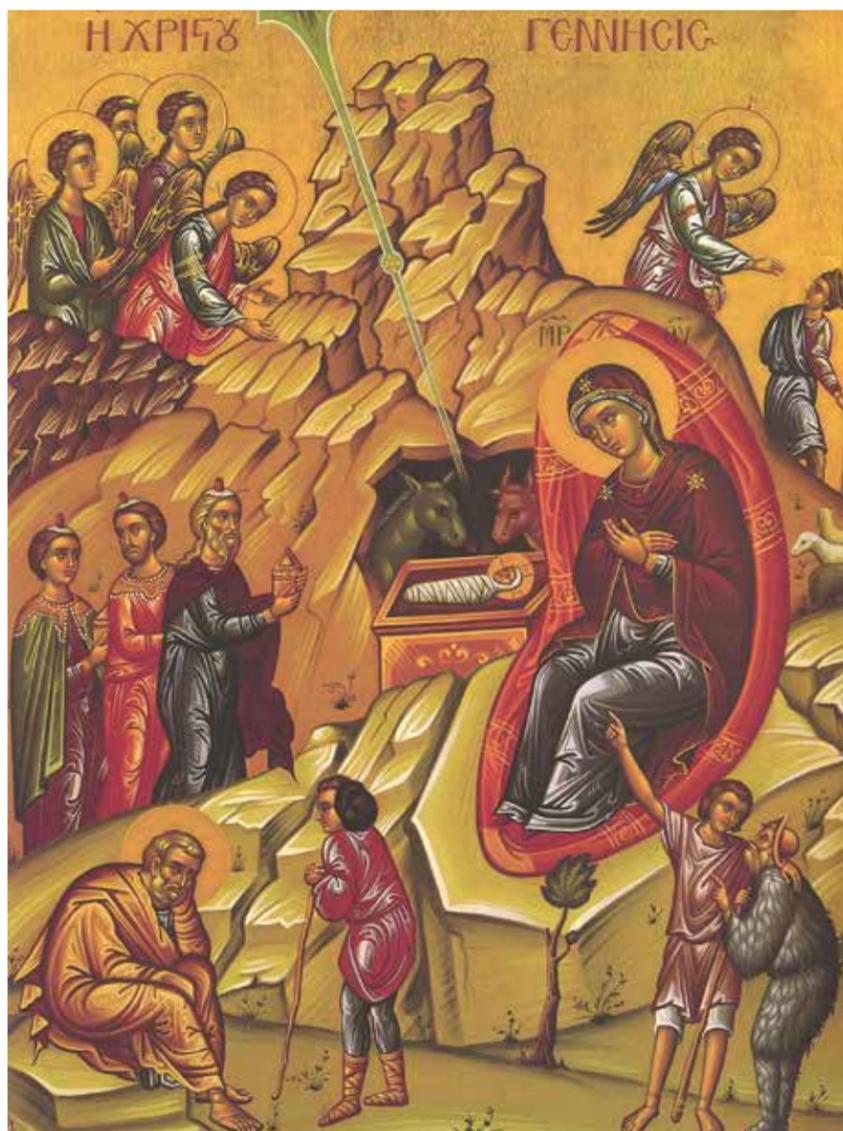
I think the Old Testament precedes the New Testament precisely so that when Jesus arrives, we understand who it is who is offering us friendship. It is true that from the beginning we were made in the image and likeness of the God who made everything and everything He made was good. It is true that in the beginning we walked in intimate friendship with God in the beautiful garden He planted for our enjoyment in the midst of the vast and beautiful universe. We walked without shame. But our vision was clouded, our minds were distorted, and our friendship was broken as we heaped sin upon sin over thousands of years, each generation learning the sins of the previous generation and inventing new ones. I have been told that according to archeologists, the most common cause of death among our ancestors was homicide. To quote an English philosopher, life was solitary, nasty, brutish, and short.

We forgot we were made in the image and likeness of God. So, when God took on flesh to extend once again the hand of most intimate friendship, we had to relearn who He was so we could recognize Him among the crowd of strangers who introduce themselves to us. In the Old Testament, He reveals Himself as “the Most High God.” Whatever other powers there might be in the universe, whether or not they are sentient, He is higher because He made them and He keeps them in existence. As the Epistle says, “He created the ages...and He sustains all things by His powerful word.” He reveals His sacred personal name to Moses as “I am who am.” In other words, He is being not caused by anything else, and He causes all other things to exist. He was also called by *Elohim*, which is plural in Hebrew for “God,” and which might

suggest that He is the sum of all divinity, not just one among myriads. He is called *El Shaddai*, which can be translated *God the All Powerful*. This title has come to us from the Greek bible as the Pantocrator, the All-Ruler, and so He appears in majesty in the apse of

wings of the wind in thunder and lightning and yet calms the storms. He is the One Who quickens all living creatures under the heavens, Who gives breath and takes it away. As Our Lord says, “And do not be afraid of them that kill the body, and are not able to kill the

tain events, He sent a message ahead of time through a living messenger called an angel. One of the reasons might be that only God knows the future, so when a messenger reveals the future, it is a sign of the divinity of the event, provided that the prediction comes true.



Icon of the Nativity of Our Lord, God, and Savior Jesus Christ

One of the greatest events in ancient times was the birth of Isaac, the only son of Sarah and Abraham. Not only was Isaac the ancestor of our Lord, but his sacrifice—stayed by the hand of God—was the prefiguring of Jesus’s own sacrifice on the Cross. An event of this magnitude was foretold not by one angel, but by three angels. In fact, the greatness and power of these three angels is such that we Christians see them as manifestation of the Holy Trinity and use them as such in our icons. A full year before his birth, the three angels tell Abraham and Sarah, both of whom are about one hundred years old, that in a year they will be blessed with a son. Indeed, it is one of these three that bargains with Abraham on behalf of God to spare the cities of the plain from destruction, while the other two proceed into the city of Sodom to save Lot and his family before the incendiary annihilation of the sinful city.

Another ancient birth that was announced by an angel was that of Samson. Between the entrance of the chosen people into the promised land from Egypt, and the establishment of the monarchy, there was the age of “judges.” It was a time of tribal society, and considerable chaos. A people called the Philistines were fighting for control of the promised land at the same time that the Hebrews supplanted the Canaanites. There has been speculation for years that the Philistines were the same as the mysterious “Sea People” who terrorized the coasts of the Mediterranean. They even occupied northern Egypt and took control from the Pharaohs for a period. The Philistines arrived from the sea while the Hebrews came from the deserts in the east. In recent years, there have been exciting discoveries that have shed light on these mysterious Sea People. In only 2017, a Swiss scholar published the translation of a huge inscription almost 100 feet long with 3000 hieroglyphs. It gives detailed history of the opportunistic rise of these people around 1200 BC to 1100 BC during the collapse of the Bronze Age.

our churches very often or in the dome over the church. When God appeared gloriously to the Prophet Isaiah in the temple, the seraphim call Him the Lord God of Sabaoth. *Sabaoth* means the best of the army, we might say, crack troops. We call Him by that title when we sing the “Holy, Holy, Holy” at the Divine Liturgy.

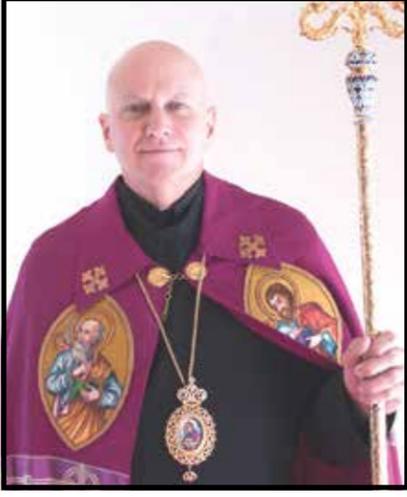
Throughout the Old Testament, the scriptures remind us Who we are dealing with lest we get “casual” in our relationship. The scriptures remind us that the One Who made everything is the One Who melts mountains and causes earthquakes, is the One Who confines the ocean and also Who releases their power, is the One Who rides on the

soul: but rather fear Him that can destroy both soul and body in hell...”, and as one psalm says, “The one who takes away the breath of princes.”

Only after we remember Who God is, and who we are, are we prepared to receive that astounding offer of intimate friendship from our Creator, the hand of friendship offered to us at the birth of Jesus.

Throughout history, there were occasions of the greatest importance for our salvation in which God announced the event ahead of time by sending a messenger. He communicated His will to many chosen servants throughout history—for example to Noah—but for cer-

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TO GUIDE OUR FEET IN THE PATH OF PEACE...

Pastoral Reflections of Bishop Kurt



2021 CHRISTMAS PASTORAL MESSAGE

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Age civilizations such as the Hittites. In fact, the inscription was discovered in the late 1800's. No one knows the location of the original, perhaps locked away in Turkish archives. Copies were made by a French archeologist. Even the recent story of the translation is like something from a Hollywood fantasy. A group of scholars formed in the 1950's to work with Turkish scholars to translate all the known fragments of the ancient language Luwian. They disbanded in 1984 without publishing their work, and the last member died in 2012. His son found all of these manuscripts in the estate and brought them to the attention of the Swiss scholar, Dr. Eberhard Zangger, who made them known to the world. As an aside, another recently discovered inscription in the Luwian language on a Hittite monument seems to corroborate a verse in the Prophet Isaiah. In Chapter 10 verses 9 and 10, Isaiah refers to the destruction of the Calno just like Carchemish. If you don't like ancient languages, you might be more interested that we also learn a lot from ancient pottery designs, ancient pictures, and even their hairstyles! All these things work together to tell us finally where the Philistines came from. I called them the "mysterious" Sea People because all the books do, but in just the past ten years they have become far less mysterious.

Returning to the story of Samson, Samson arose as a local hero against the Philistines in this time of chaos and upheaval. Many of the fantastic events in his life were a prefiguring of the Messiah. For example, Samson fell asleep in a Philistine city at night, and they barricaded the gates, so he ripped the gates off the hinges and dropped them many miles away from the city. Christian tradition sees this as a prefiguring of Our Lord's sleep in death, and then his destructions of the gates of Hades which we see in our icons, Jesus pulling Adam and Eve out of Hades with the gates knocked off their hinges. Another prefiguring of Our Lord is when Samson kills a lion with his bare hands, and later finds a beehive and honey in the corpse. A millennium later, Jesus Christ destroyed sin and death with his bare hands, and sweetness and life flowed from the remains.

The announcement of the birth of Samson by an angel is almost as long and detailed as for our Lord. One of the things that it does not tell us is the name of the angel. When Samson's father asks the angel his name, the angel replies, "Why do you ask me my name, seeing it is wonderful?" After the angel

ascends to heaven, the pious Manoah observes, "We will probably die now because we have seen God." His wife, filled with common sense, points out that if God intended to kill them, they would already be dead, and He would not have revealed the things the angel told them.

In the Latin rite, our ecclesiastical cousins prepare for the great day of Christmas, which means "Christ Mass," with the four Sundays of Advent. Advent can run four or five weeks depending on what day of the week is Christmas that year. In our own tradition, we prepare for Christmas with the Philip Fast or *Filipovka* which begins on the day after the feast of Saint Philip on November 14. Another tradition that is fascinating and profound is the Maronite practice. The Maronite Church is one of the Syriac rites, and was founded by Saint Maron, a monk, and much of their liturgy and spirituality reflects a monastic foundation. However, deeper research indicates that the early history of the Maronite Church, like the Sea People, is clouded in mystery.

The Maronites prepare for the great day of Christmas by recapitulating God's own preparation and announcements from 2000 years ago. Instead of four Sundays, the Maronites begin six Sundays before Christmas. In this beautiful tradition, the sixth Sunday before Christmas commemorates the Announcement to the priest Zechariah that his wife Elizabeth, though advanced in years, would conceive and bear a son who would be himself a great prophet and the fulfillment of the last prophesy of the Old Testament. The last verse in the Hebrew prophets is the words of Malachi, "Now I am sending to you Elijah the prophet, before the Day of the Lord comes, the great and terrible day. He will turn the heart of fathers to their sons, and the heart of sons to their fathers, lest I come and strike the land with utter destruction." The Archangel Gabriel tells the stupefied priest Zechariah that his son John, "will be filled with the Holy Spirit even from his mother's womb, and he will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God. He will go before him in the spirit and power of Elijah to turn the hearts of fathers toward children and the disobedient to the understanding of the righteous, to prepare a people fit for the Lord."

On the fifth Sunday before Christmas, the Maronites commemorate the appearance of the Archangel Gabriel to the Virgin in Nazareth. If Zechariah was stupefied to hear the archangel say to him, "Do not be afraid Zechariah, your prayer has been heard," how much more must Mary have been overwhelmed when the same Archangel Gabriel greeted her with, "Rejoice grace-filled, the Lord is with you!" Mary was speechless at the greet-

ing, so the archangel went on to say, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found grace with God." If Zechariah was astonished to hear that his son, the product of a miraculous birth in old age, would be the fulfillment of the last prophesy in the Old Testament, how much more for Mary, who heard that for her son, "You will name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High, and the Lord will give him the throne of David his father." Furthermore, the birth itself would be even more miraculous with no human father, but rather, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will come upon you." The archangel goes on to say, "Therefore the child born will be called holy, the Son of God."

On the following Sunday, the Maronites celebrate the next part of God's revelation before the birth of Jesus. Although Mary was "greatly troubled" by the appearance of the archangel and his transcendent message, she spent no time thinking about herself, but left to take care of her aged cousin Elizabeth without hesitation, traveling into the hill country though pregnant. God continues the exciting revelations when Elizabeth is inspired to proclaim to Mary, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb!" Just as Zechariah and Mary were overwhelmed with their news, Elizabeth feels deeply humbled and says to her cousin, "How is it that the mother of my Lord should come to me?" Mary's swift action is a reminder that true revelation from God should lead to charity, not self-absorption.

On the third Sunday before Christmas, they commemorate the birth of Saint John the Forerunner, or as we call him in the West, Saint John the Baptist or Baptizer. Although no angel appears in the account, there is additional revelation, even very beautiful. Zechariah has had his mouth sealed for nine months as a consequence of casting doubt on the good news of the Archangel Gabriel. After he confirms in writing the name John as proposed by his wife, his mouth is opened. Since the Messiah is prophesied to open the mouth of the mute as a sign, and Jesus does in fact fulfill this prophesy, you might say that Zechariah's speech is one of the first of the signs of Jesus the Christ. Under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, Zechariah does not simply begin to talk, but sings a beautiful poem that is then recited and sung by Christians all over the world for two thousand years. Called the *Benedictus* in the west, it has been set to music by most of the great composers. It is recited or sung every day in the offices of both east and west. Zechariah thanks God for the miraculous, but expected, deliverance of his people, and the coming of the "dawn from on high," that is Jesus, who will deliver the world from sin in God's "tender mercy."

On the next Sunday, the Maronite Church switches the point of view to the Gospel of Saint Matthew and the revelations to Saint Joseph. In Saint Matthew, there are five revelations around the birth of the Messiah, four of which are to Saint Joseph. These complex revelations require more than a paragraph to describe. The first message comes to Joseph when he learns that his betrothed is already pregnant. Unsure of what to do, an angel comes to Joseph in a dream to reassure him and says, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary your wife into your home. For that which is conceived in her by the Spirit is Holy. She will bear a son, and you will name him Jesus because he will save his people from their sins." Notice the key facts here: Joseph is descended from King David; Mary has conceived by the Holy Spirit—not by human power; she will bear a son; and Joseph will name him *Jesus*. All Christians should know the meaning of the name *Jesus*. Jesus is Greek for Joshua, and it means "Ya saves." "Ya" is a short form of the sacred name of God in Hebrew. This is why the angel says, "you are to name him Jesus because he will save his people from their sins."

On the final Sunday before Christmas, the Maronites read the genealogy of Jesus, just as we do in our Church and also in the West. The birth of Jesus was one of the most important events in the history of the entire cosmos. Although Satan spent thousands of years after the fall of Adam accusing us before God, and even worse, tempting us to accuse others and ourselves, the Prince of Darkness was shocked to see God himself take on our human flesh, to redeem us from slavery and prepare for even greater glory, glory far beyond the glory already envied by the devil. Although we forget we are made in the image and likeness of God, God does not forget. Every year at Christmas He reminds us again of His tender love for us. As God prepared for thousands of years for the first Christmas, we should spend time preparing ourselves each year for the memorial of Christmas. We should take time from our materialistic preparations, shopping, cooking, and decorating. We should take the time to read the scriptures and their sublime accounts of the prophecies of the Messiah, and the fulfillment of those prophecies.

"And you child, will be called prophet of the Most High, for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways, to give his people knowledge of salvation through the forgiveness of their sins, through the tender mercy of our God by which the dawn from on high will visit us to shine on those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the path of peace."

+Kurt Bunette

SAINT GEORGE IN NEWARK CELEBRATES 100 YEARS!

On Sunday, October 17, 2021, Saint George Byzantine Catholic Church, in the Ironbound section of Newark, NJ, celebrated the 100th Anniversary of its founding. The celebration was all the sweeter because the gathering had been postponed for one year due to the pandemic. Bishop Kurt celebrated the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy of Thanksgiving with Father David Baratelli, Parish Administrator, as concelebrant. Cantor Kenneth Dilks faithfully led the joyful congregational responses and parishioner, Michael Fitz, was altar server. Upon entering the century-old church, Bishop Kurt

was welcomed with our traditional signs of hospitality – bread, salt, and the keys to the church.

Saint George Parish’s humble roots began in a tinsmith shop on Houston Street in Newark’s Ironbound section where, on the Fifth Sunday of Lent in 1920, Father Andreykovich celebrated the first Divine Liturgy. Construction of the present church began in 1932, during the Great Depression, and was completed in 1942, during World War II. Saint George was blessed to have Bishop Michael (Dudick) as its pastor for five years

from 1963-1968; he was named second bishop of Passaic while he was pastor of the parish.

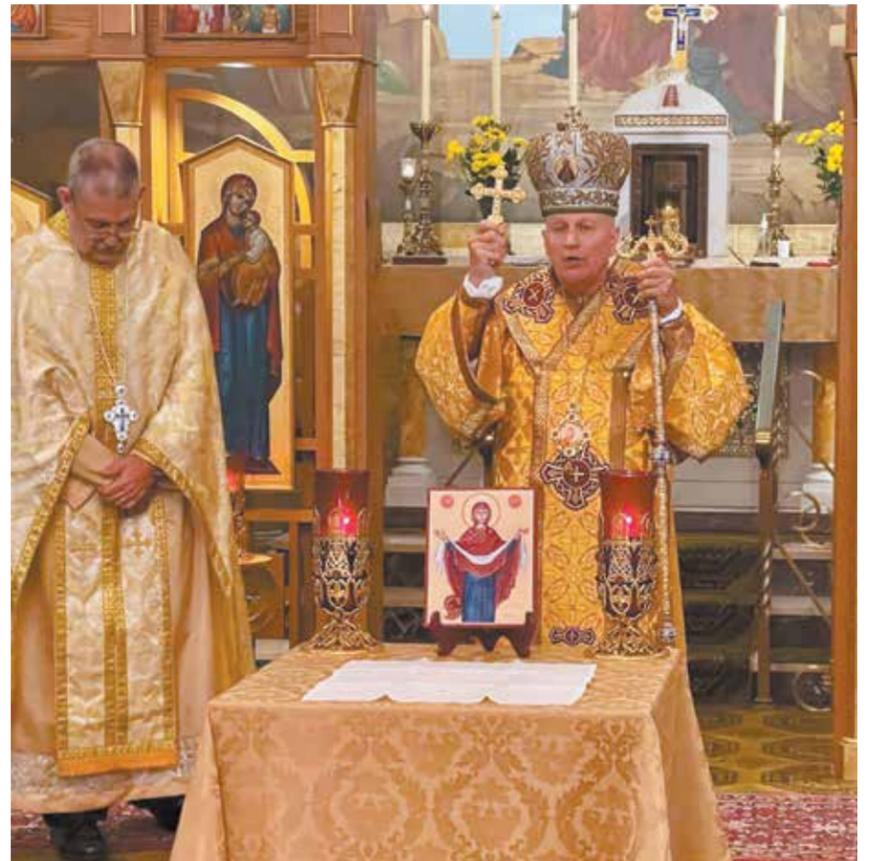
Today, many second, third, and fourth generation descendants of the founders continue to worship at Saint George Church. As Father Dave has expressed, “The vision and hope of our ‘noble founders’ is as alive and present in this moment as it was when they first met and committed themselves to establishing this worshipping community.”

After Divine Liturgy, which included an inspiring homily by Bishop Kurt, the

parish continued its joyous celebration outdoors at Mario’s Tutto Bene restaurant in Union, NJ, where the guests enjoyed one another’s good company and conversation, as well as a bountiful Italian luncheon served family style under a festive tent.

Tutto bene, indeed!

May our Lord continue to bless the parishioners of Saint George Parish with peace, health, and happiness, and may their names be inscribed in the Book of Life.





PEOPLE YOU KNOW AROUND THE EPARCHY

IN SAINT PETERSBURG... IN SUGARLOAF...

Beginning of the School of Religion Year

On Sunday, September, 26, 2021, children and teachers at Saint Theres Byzantine Catholic Church in Saint Petersburg, FL, processed into church to begin the new school year of religious classes. At the end of the Divine Liturgy they received a blessing from their pastor, Father Robert Evancho.



Father Robert Evancho together with teachers, parents, and children of the ECF Program.

75 Years a Monastic!

Mother Marija of Holy Annunciation Monastery is celebrating the 75th anniversary of her entrance into monastic life. She entered the Discalced Carmelite Monastery of Our Lady of Mt Carmel in Morristown, NJ, in 1946. Mother Marija is Prioress at Holy Annunciation Monastery in Sugarloaf, PA. *May God grant her many blessed years! Na mnojaha i blahaja l'ita!*



Father Gregory Noga with Mother Marija after celebrating the Divine Liturgy honoring her for her 75th Anniversary

IN HILLSBOROUGH...

End of Summer Picnic

On Sunday, August 29, 2021, the parishioners of Saint Mary Parish in Hillsborough, NJ, held their annual picnic to end the summer season with a celebration before the beginning of the school year and the return of cold weather. This year was a particularly joyful celebration since the picnic had been canceled in 2020 due to the pandemic. There was plenty of food and activities for all ages! Father James Badeaux is the pastor of Saint Mary Parish.



IN HILLSBOROUGH...

ByzanTEEN Constructs Bee Hive

In September, 2020, Tatiana Hlinka, a teenage parishioner and member of Saint Mary ByzanTEENS of Saint Mary Byzantine Catholic Church in Hillsborough, NJ, and daughter of Mickey (Mikulas) and Katarina Hlinka, began constructing a honeybee hive box and honeybee colony that was established at the Readington Community Garden, in Readington, NJ. The hive will increase the garden's productivity and provide a great educational experience for students, scouts, community residents, and nature enthusiasts. Tatiana also visits her bees weekly to hone her beekeeping skills. Father James Badeaux is the pastor of Saint Mary Parish in Hillsborough.



NEW JERSEY AND NEW YORK WEDDING JUBILARIANS CELEBRATION

On Sunday, September 26, 2021, couples celebrating a special anniversary in an increment of five years, gathered at Saint Mary Parish in Hillsborough, NJ, with their chief shepherd, Bishop Kurt, and their parish priests of the New Jersey Synccellate. At the conclusion of the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy, Bishop Kurt was available to have a photo taken with each couple present. Then, everyone adjourned to Saint Mary's Parish Center for a festive dinner. The celebration this year included couples celebrating special anniversaries from 2020, as well, since the celebration was canceled due to the pandemic. *May God grant them many years!* Pictured below are Anne and Richard Ostarticki, celebrating 65 years of marriage.



MOUNT SAINT MACRINA HOUSE OF PRAYER

ONLINE ZOOM PROGRAM FOR FALL 2021

Call: 724-438-7149 or Email: hpmsm@verizon.net to register

Please provide your email address and phone number to receive your zoom link

ADVENT BIBLE STUDY

Nov. 11, 18, Dec. 2, 9

"An Introductory Study of the Prophets Isaiah and Jeremiah"

With Sister Melita Marie Penchalk, OSBM

10AM—12NOON EST

Offering: \$25

Registration Due: Nov. 8

Available on Zoom

Christmas Afternoon of Reflection

Dec. 12

With Father Stephen Wahal

1PM—2:30PM EST

Offering: \$20

Registration Due: Dec. 7

Available on Zoom



When traveling to the Mid-Atlantic, please visit our churches

Maryland— Patronage of the Mother of God

1265 Linden Avenue
Baltimore, MD 21227
Phone 410-247-4936
Web www.patronagechurch.org
Sunday Divine Liturgy 9:15 AM

Patronage at Abingdon meeting at: Stone Chapel at Saint Francis de Sales Church

1450 Abingdon Road
Abingdon, MD 21009
Sunday Divine Liturgy 5:30 PM

Patronage at Hagerstown meeting at: Saint Ann Catholic Church

1525 Oak Hill Avenue
Hagerstown, MD 21742
Saturday Vigil Liturgy 6:45 PM 2 per month
Call Baltimore for schedule

Saint Gregory of Nyssa

12420 Old Gunpowder Road Spur
Beltsville, MD 20705
Phone 301-953-9323
Web www.stgregoryofnyssa.net
Sunday Divine Liturgies
Church Slavonic 8:00 AM
Sunday Matins 9:30 AM
English Liturgy 10:30 AM

Epiphany Mission

9301 Warfield Road
Gaithersburg, MD
Web www.eolmission.org
Sunday Divine Liturgy at 10:00 am

Virginia— Epiphany of our Lord

3410 Woodburn Road
Annandale, VA 22003
Phone: 703-573-3986
Web www.eolbcc.org
Sunday Divine Liturgies 8:00 AM & 10:30 AM

Ascension of our Lord

114 Palace Lane
Williamsburg, VA 23185
Phone 757-585-2878 (rectory)
Web www.ascensionva.org
Sunday Divine Liturgy 11:00 AM

Our Lady of Perpetual Help

216 Parliament Drive
Virginia Beach, VA 23462
Phone 757-456-0809
Web www.olphvb.org
Sunday Divine Liturgy 8:00 AM

North Carolina— Saints Cyril and Methodius

2510 Piney Plains Road
Cary, NC 27518

Phone 919-239-4877
Web www.sscyrilmethodius.org
Sunday Divine Liturgy 9 and 11 AM

District of Columbia— Byzantine Ruthenian Chapel Basilica of the National Shrine

400 Michigan Avenue, NE
Washington, DC 20017
Phone 202-526-8300
Web www.nationalshrine.org
No regularly scheduled Sunday Liturgy.

To reserve a date and time, priests must call the Liturgy Office and submit a current letter from their eparchy's Safe Environment Office.



2021 BISHOP'S APPEAL

Byzantine Catholic Eparchy of Passaic

445 Lackawanna Avenue – Woodland Park, NJ 07424

www.eparchyofpassaic.com

PLEDGE NOW THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2021

**BYZANTINE CATHOLIC EPARCHY OF PASSAIC
2021 BISHOP'S ANNUAL APPEAL**

Please pledge online at eparchyofpassaic.com
or mail check payable to Eparchy of Passaic
in the envelope provided.

*As challenges continue to affect us, please take
care of yourself, your family and your parish first.*

\$2,500.00 \$1,000.00 \$500.00

\$250.00 _____ Other \$ _____

- full payment enclosed
- first payment enclosed, bill me for 4 additional payments

The 2021 Bishop's Appeal will run through
December 31, 2021. Contributions will be accepted
through the fiscal year ending June 2022.

New Address or Correction

Name: _____
 Street: _____
 City, State, Zip: _____
 Parish: _____



2021 DEACON RETREAT

by Father Deacon Tim Kennedy

Glory to Jesus Christ! Glory forever!

A warm end of summer weekend in September, at the former Seminary of the Immaculate Conception, now a retreat center in Huntington, Long Island, in the Diocese of Rockville Centre, New York, and within our Eparchy, was the setting for the Eparchy of Passaic Deacons Retreat 2021.

Father Christopher Ciccarino, a priest of the Archdiocese of Newark, Associate Dean and Professor of Biblical Studies at Immaculate Conception Seminary at Seton Hall University, was the retreat master for the weekend. The Lord used him in a powerful way. Father Chris used Sacred Scripture, personal stories, and humor to lead us on a journey with Christ and our Mother Mary, to a place of respite and reflection.



Life is a pilgrimage journey. About 25 brother deacons, readers, and deacon candidates journeyed from various parts of our Eparchy to these beautiful grounds for a weekend of prayer, reflection, learning and fraternal fellowship. It was awesome to be together again after being segregated, socially-distanced, masked, and locked down! While the journey for most was arduous — traveling long distances and dealing with weekend New York City traffic — once everyone arrived and settled in, it turned into an amazing weekend.

Our weekend was perfectly balanced with time together sharing fraternal bond at meals; forging new and rekindling friendships; time alone for personal prayer and reflection; joining together in liturgical prayer: Divine Liturgy, Office of Holy Oil of the Anointing of the Sick, Moleben, and Panachida. The highlight of the weekend was the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy celebrated by our Bishop Kurt. His words of encouragement were very edifying and a nice way to finish the retreat.



The Carpathian Cookery cookbook for sale

The Carpathian Cookery cookbook, has entered its 19th printing, having sold over 17,500 copies, is available for sale. This cookbook was requested by the Library of Congress to be in their ethnic cooking collection. The 330-page cookbook has a new look and features a protective plastic cover. The book includes sections on Christmas and Easter customs and recipes, traditional Rusyn and Slavic foods, other ethnic dishes, and many other tried-and-true recipes of St. John's pa-

rishioners. There is a variety of paska bread and kolachi (filled roll) recipes, as well as meatless dishes and Lenten recipes, suitable for the Great Fast, as well as the Pre-Christmas Fast. The cost of the cookbook is \$14.00 plus \$4.00 postage and handling (\$18.00). If ordering from Canada, please send a \$28.00 U.S. Postal money order payable in U.S. dollars to reflect the difference in the exchange rate and postage cost. To order please send a check or money order to: Ethnic Craft Club, St. John Byzantine Catholic Church, 201 E. Main Street, Uniontown, PA 15401, or call 724-438-6027 (M-F 9AM-3PM – leave message), for more information. You may contact us at: carpathiancookery@gmail.com.

St. Mary Byzantine Catholic Church Trenton, NJ
Presents

The Theoria Chamber Choir
Singing a program of traditional holiday music.

December 18, 2021 at 4:00 PM

For details, contact Fr. Yuriy (609) 394-5004

Byzantine Catholic Outreach
The Villages, Florida

Served from Saint Anne Byzantine Catholic Church, New Port Richey, Florida

**“A loving, praying community giving
Glory to Jesus Christ!”**

VIGIL DIVINE LITURGY EVERY SATURDAY, 2:00 P.M.
HOLYDAYS OF OBLIGATION ON THE HOLYDAY, 12:00 NOON
Served by Father Oleksiy Nebesnyk

Location: Saint Alban Church, 625 W. Lady Lake Blvd, Lady Lake, FL
Next to the American Legion, CR 466 & Rolling Acres Road

MEET, GREET, AND MUNCH FOLLOWING ALL LITURGIES

Slavic dinners being planned
Outreach Contact /Phone: 352-530-9631
Dr. Barbara Yastishock-Lutz, Lay Representative, drbylutz@comcast.net



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

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Sunday Divine Liturgy

10:00 AM

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LIFE, LOVE, AND THE HUMAN PERSON

By Ann M. Koshute, MTS

MAKING SMOOTH THE ROUGH EDGES

The beach is definitely one of my “happy places.” I love walking across the sand, slowly making my way toward the edge of the shore where the waves lap against my bare feet. It’s invigorating, and also calming, watching the sea surge forward and pull back in a steady rhythm. Equally as captivating to me is scanning the beach for any precious mementos given up by the sea. On a recent visit to Florida, I walked the beach daily and looked forward to discovering seashells in various shapes, colors and sizes. Many of them were broken, unable to withstand their sea-tossed journey, while others were left intact to glimmer in the sunshine. On my daily walks, seashells weren’t my only discovery; little bits of color, glimmering like jewels, also dotted the shoreline. A coffee table book in the rental where we were staying for the week solved the mystery: sea glass. I had heard this term before (many people collect or even buy sea glass to make crafts), but assumed it referred to a particular kind of stone or shell found in the ocean. Sadly, these little sea jewels are fragments of garbage; glass jars and bottles that are carelessly discarded and find their way into the ocean. Anyone who has ever walked the beach has come across all manner of trash that was either left behind by a beachgoer or washed up from the ocean. It is sad that the beautiful Creation God gifted to us as stewards and caretakers is so easily disrespected. As a society, we Americans are especially guilty of overbuying and discarding what we no longer need, or just acquiring something bigger and better. Even for those of us trying to be responsible, too often we want, we waste, we move on.

In his second encyclical, *On the Care of Our Common Home*, Pope Francis laments what he terms “the throwaway

culture” that regards the earth less as our home to care for (a task given us by God), than a place whose resources can be used and abused. It’s an important message, reminding us that “in the beginning” God gifted mankind with the Earth and its inhabitants, making it our home until we join Him in the eternal life of His Kingdom. We are both guests and caretakers, with the duty and privilege to use Earth’s resources wisely and well, and to preserve its beauty. The Holy Father has been outspoken about this duty and privilege, and not without controversy. But what many don’t realize, or perhaps conveniently ignore, is that the Pope does not limit the bounds of the “throwaway culture” to the environment. In this encyclical, and in a number of subsequent speeches and interviews, the Holy Father makes clear that the ever-increasing attitude that human persons are “disposable,” that is, literally can be “thrown away,” is sinful and dehumanizes every one of us. Abortion, euthanasia, sex-trafficking, oppressive governments and mass poverty are some of the specific attacks on human dignity that the Pope condemns and warns are offenses to God.

Believe it or not, these thoughts came to mind as I walked the beach and began noticing those bits of color dotting the shoreline. At first, I was appalled that something that sounded so pretty as “sea glass” was not the result of natural beauty, but a product of “throwaway culture.” Yet I couldn’t ignore the fact that these bits of garbage had been run through the churning ocean waves, their broken and jagged edges smoothed, now polished and shiny, their colors brilliant as they captured the sun’s reflection. What was used and discarded had been purified by the rough seas and deposited to a “new life” in the sand. Whether those bits

remained as little signposts to beauty for beach-walkers or were collected by someone crafty to be turned into a mosaic or jewelry, the lesson penetrated my heart as I thought about the coming Feast of the Nativity of Our Lord. Even my brokenness can be repaired, the dirt washed from my soul, and the faded color restored to my spirit. But that requires being tossed about in the rough seas of suffering and personal conversion and repentance. And most of all, it requires a Savior Who becomes for us that “purifying sea” by first entering into it Himself.

Every one of us participates in the “throwaway culture,” in how we treat other people and the ways in which we take for granted and even abuse God’s beautiful Creation. We all know the experience of being (or feeling) as if we’ve been thrown away, in the hurt we’ve felt through rejection, physical or mental abuse, and even in the experience of our sinfulness, where we may fear that God has no forgiveness left in His heart for us. This is why the events of the Incarnation and Nativity of Christ are so significant. God became man to declare definitively that no man or woman

is disposable or replaceable. He came as a human man to uphold the dignity of all human persons, at every stage of life. God became man to save us from the ravages of sin, and to restore the brilliant beauty of His divine image in us. As we gather with friends and family this Christmas, let’s be mindful of the gift of Creation and the beautiful resources in it that are for our good use and stewardship. And let us reflect on the greatest gift of God’s Creation: that He has given life to each of us, and we are to guard, protect and be stewards of each other. God, in His infinite love and mercy, through His Incarnation, has not thrown us away! Let us rejoice, and in turn, regard each other – rough edges and all – with love and gratitude.

My love shall never fall away from you, nor my covenant of peace be shaken, says the LORD, who has mercy on you. O afflicted one, storm-battered and unconsoled, I lay your pavements in carnelians, your foundations in sapphires; I will make your battlements of rubies, your gates of jewels, and all your walls of precious stones. Isaiah 54:10-12 ECL

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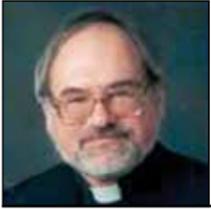


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THE BYZANTINE LITURGY

By Archpriest David Petras, SEOD

THE PRE-SANCTIFIED DIVINE LITURGY

There are two anaphoras in common use in the Byzantine Church, one attributed to Saint Basil the Great and the other to Saint John Chrysostom. When these prayers are said, the bread and wine offered by the community become the Body and Blood of Christ by the power of God. The anaphora is the real re-enactment of God's salvation, and the gifts consecrated are completed by receiving them in Holy Communion, which brings about our deification, for we become what we eat. The gifts we receive are not the dead body of our Lord, but his living Body, raised in the mystery of the Resurrection. We might say, then, that the anaphora is not only the prayer of sacrifice, but the prayer of resurrection.

The most holy time of the year in the Church is the Great Fast, which we also call the Great Lent. It is a solemn time of preparation to celebrate Pascha, the Greek term for Passover, which commemorates the salvation of our Lord accomplished on the Cross and in his glorious Resurrection. The Byzantine Church thus decided that we would also abstain from the commemoration

of the resurrection as we prepare ourselves for the celebration of the Resurrection. A Divine Liturgy was created in which there was no anaphora, no eucharistic prayer, which would be a commemoration of the mystery of the resurrection. This period is from the Monday after Cheesefare, or Forgiveness, Sunday until Holy Saturday. There were four exceptions: each Sunday, for Sunday is the weekly celebration of resurrection; each Saturday, for Saturday is the Sabbath day and is holy; the feast of the Annunciation, one of the twelve great feasts which certainly partakes of the mystery of our Lord's incarnation; and Holy Thursday, the day on which Jesus instituted the mystery of the Eucharist.

Yet, though there was no anaphora prayed on the days of the Fast, it was felt that the faithful could not be deprived of the Bread of Life, Holy Communion in the Body and Blood of Christ. Therefore, the holy gifts were consecrated on the preceding Sunday, and were distributed during the week in a service of Communion with Vespers, called therefore the "Presanctified" Divine Liturgy. The Great Fast was seen as our forty-day journey to the promised land of the resurrection, and so we were fed with the holy gifts just as the Hebrew children were fed on manna from heaven during their forty-year journey to the promised land of Israel. Originally, the Presanctified Liturgy was celebrated daily, but today the custom is that it is celebrated on Wednesday and

Friday and the first three days of Holy Week. We are not deprived, then, of the spiritual food that gives us life.

The Presanctified Divine Liturgy has no Anaphora. The gift is already the real presence of the Body of Christ, for the bread is consecrated on Sunday, but not the wine. The gift of the Body of our Lord is brought to the Holy Table in a solemn procession which is done in silence. After the gift is placed on the Holy Table, there is no prayer of approach to the altar, no kiss of peace, no anaphora, but the deacon immediately says the Litany of the Angel of Peace and the priest reads the prayer before the *Our Father*. This is a particularly solemn prayer for Holy Communion which may be said to be the replacement for the Anaphora. We should attend carefully to this prayer in order to understand the mystery of the Great Fast.

The Presanctified Divine Liturgy was introduced probably in the fifth century after Our Lord, and some would possibly have considered it untraditional. The prayer begins, then, by addressing God as "God of mysteries beyond human thought and vision," and that God has "revealed to us the service of this liturgy," and that it is, indeed, a "gift and sacrifice for our (the priests') sins and for the peoples' failings..." The priest knows he has sinned but does not judge the people. The gift of Holy Communion is then proclaimed as a wonder and miracle that delivers us "from ev-

ery impurity," and "sanctifies our souls and bodies with a holiness that cannot be taken away." The gift is intended for us who stand before the presence of God in the holy mysteries present on the Holy Table of the altar. We cannot make ourselves worthy of the gifts by our own power, but only by the action of God who enables us to partake of the gifts "with a pure conscience, without shame and with an enlightened heart." That this is true is confirmed by two passages from the New Testament, first, that we are given life and united with Christ, as Jesus taught us in the Gospel of Saint John, "whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me, and I in him, (John 6:56)" and second, that we become temples of the Holy Spirit by partaking of the Bread of Life, as Saint Paul wrote, "Do you not know that your body is a temple of the holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own?" (1 Corinthians 6:19) Holy Communion, then, is that true mystery that rescues us from evil and gives us God's promised blessings, the fulfillment of our journey to his Holy Land.

Before distributing Holy Communion, the priest unites the consecrated bread which is the true Body of Christ with unconsecrated wine to facilitate the giving of the gift. It is now generally believed that the wine remains plain wine, and not the Blood of Christ. However, some liturgists believe that the faith of the Church was that the wine becomes the Blood of Christ when it touches the consecrated Body of Christ. In either case, we treat it with great respect, for, indeed, in the Presanctified Divine Liturgy, we are given life by being united with Christ himself, our true God.

ECL



FROM THE OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

Deacon Doctor Thomas Shubeck will be ordained to the Order of Presbyter through the laying-on of hands and the invocation of the Holy Spirit by Bishop Kurt on Saturday, December 18, 2021, at 10 AM, at Saint Thomas Byzantine Catholic Church in Rahway, NJ.

Emmanuel, God with us, is the so-called "reason" for the "season."

I often chuckle when I see signs and bumper stickers exclaiming that yes, indeed, "Jesus is the reason for the season!" While I understand the sentiment behind the quaint phrase, I have to say that it bothers me a bit. What bothers me about it is not what it says, but rather, what it doesn't say.

While yes, it is a seemingly polite way to remind the more mainstream/commercial world of why Christmas is celebrated, this phrase may also create some confusion. During exactly what season is Jesus the reason? Is it the commercial Christmas shopping season from the

day after Thanksgiving until December 24? Or is it from *Filipovka* until December 25? Or until Theophany? Does Jesus' reason for the season coincide with the Roman Catholic season of Advent? I think you get the idea.

Saying that Jesus is the "reason for the season" all but undercuts the entire liturgical life of the Church and presupposes that the "commercial calendar" is the standard timeframe of the "Christmas Season" and Jesus is supposed "fit into" that timeframe, ultimately giving the impression that, to the chagrin of Charlie Brown, commercialism won out in the great debate of "what Christmas is all about." What came from the good intention of defending the faith ends up having the exact opposite effect. Furthermore, it almost seems like Jesus has been reduced to a seasonal item; just another decoration to be taken out of the attic, dusted off, and put

on display only to be put away in a few short weeks until next year.

If we truly want to defend the faith, I firmly believe that we don't need catchy phrases, or slogans, or any such thing. We need to look no further than the Church herself. If we want to defend the faith, pray. Follow the liturgical seasons. Fast when the Church asks us to Fast, Feast when She asks us to Feast. We need not exclaim Jesus to be the "reason for the season," but rather the very reason for living every single day! Even further, we need not even exclaim it—we need to LIVE it! Let our actions speak for themselves.

Commercialism is indeed a problem, one that will not go away. We do not need to purchase signs to combat it. There is only one sign we need, and that is the Sign of Emmanuel, God with us! As we, a people of faith, prepare for

Christmas—the Feast of the Nativity, the Winter Pascha—let us call to mind the words of the Prophet Isaiah:

There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots. And the Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD. And his delight shall be in the fear of the LORD. (Isaiah 11:1-3)

Let us search for wisdom and understanding, counsel and might, not in a sign, but in THE Sign. Let us never forget that this Sign is not an end—no, far from it. The Incarnation is, as is Christmas Day, not the end of a season. No. It is the beginning. The beginning of the fulfillment of the promise of eternal life in and with our Lord, God, and Savior Jesus Christ! ECL

PRIESTLY REFLECTIONS

Father Paul Varchola West



THE REASON FOR THE SEASON



SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES

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

THE B LIST AND THE HEAVENLY BANQUET

Two Sundays before Christmas we hear our Lord's parable of the unwilling banquet guests (Luke 14:16-24). Those who refuse the invitation sound a lot like people who always have excuses skipping Sunday worship: shopping, sports, family and social commitments.

Gentle Saint Luke often omits some of the harsher expressions found in the other Gospels. Saint Matthew's (22:1-14) record of this same parable informs us that it was addressed specifically to the Pharisees and came on the heels of Jesus' warning, "The kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a nation bearing the fruits of it" (Matthew 21:43). So, the immediate point of this parable is to predict both Israel's rejection of Jesus the Messiah and the inclusion of the Gentiles in God's plan of salvation. This same message is

picked up in the Tropar for the second Sunday before Christmas: "By faith, You, O Christ, justified the forefathers. Through them you betrothed Yourself to a Church from all nations." The reference to the "forefathers" reminds us that God already included the Gentiles in His plans when He said to Abraham: "In you, all the families of the earth will be blessed" (Genesis 12:3).

It's not flattering to think "the poor, the crippled, the lame and the blind" (Luke 14:21) refers to us Gentile Christians, the "B list" of guests invited to the banquet, but it is a fact is that Israel holds a primary place in God's plan (John 4:22; Romans 9:4-5; 11:29). The parable's meaning goes deeper still, however. The very first people to reject God's invitation were Adam and Eve. As a result of their original sin, we are all handicapped by sin—original, personal, institutional. We are all disfigured, Jew and Greek alike (Romans 1-2). So, you might say, ever since humanity's first sin, there has never really been an A list in God's plan. "All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23).

You might well ask, why is there even a B list? Why doesn't God just say,

"Forget it! Who needs you mortals anyway?" Why did God not strike Adam and Eve dead immediately? Why did He give humanity a second chance with Noah? The only answer is God's love. It's why He created a world at all and put us at its center, why He made a covenant with Israel, and why Christmas happened: "God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son" (John 3:16).

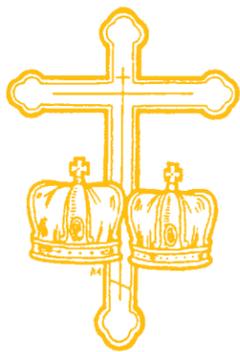
So how do those of us on the "B list" make sure we're among the "few who are chosen" from among the "many who are called" (Matthew 22:14). By responding to His invitation to "come to the banquet" every Sunday. How do we stay among the chosen once the Liturgy is over? In the Epistle for the Second Sunday before Christmas, Saint Paul (Colossians 3:4-11) lists all sorts of vices we must avoid.

Reading beyond where the Sunday selection ends, Saint Paul proposes a number of basic human virtues that teach us to imitate God's love for us (Colossians 3:12-14). Then Saint Paul commands us to "be thankful" (*eucharistoi* in Greek; Colossians 3:15) so that we keep the spirit of the Eucharistic Liturgy going throughout the week.

God created a world He didn't need. God created us although He doesn't need us. God kept (and keeps) reaching out to us even though He has no need to save us. Gratitude is the opposite of taking gifts for granted. How might our lives be different if we were less prone to take our own lives for granted, if we treated God's creation and each other with gratitude?

We can be confident of being among the chosen if we respond to God's love by loving Him in return in worship and service. We can be confident of being among the chosen if we respond to God's love by loving each other, despite our preferences and despite everyone else's faults and shortcomings. We're in no position to pass judgment: we are all on the B list.

No surprise, then, that Jesus chose to reach out to tax collectors and prostitutes. No wonder He healed the blind, the lame and the lepers. No wonder He was born homeless in a stable and killed as a criminal. How great is God's love for those of us on the B list! **ECL**



CROWNED IN LOVE

One Day Pre-Cana Program for the New Jersey Syncellate. Are you getting married in 2022 or 2023? Save the date and join us via Zoom on Saturday, March 5, 2022 for a one-day learning experience to prepare you for the Sacrament of Matrimony. Contact Fr. Jack Custer at passaiccathedral@gmail.com for further information.

Russell Conwell, the founder of Temple University in Philadelphia, became famous for his lecture, *Acres of Diamonds*, which he delivered over six thousand times all around the world. He tells the story of Ali Hafed, who sold his home and traveled to the ends of the earth in search of diamonds. Ali Hafed committed suicide, destitute, in a far-off land, having failed to find any diamonds at all. Years later, the man who had purchased Ali Hafed's property went into his back yard to allow his camel to drink from a shallow stream on the property. There he discovered a diamond and then eventually a huge diamond mine on that same property.

Conwell states, "Had Ali Hafed remained at home and dug in his own cellar, or underneath his own wheat-fields, or in his own garden, instead of wretchedness, starvation, and death by suicide in a strange land, he would have

had 'acres of diamonds.' For every acre of that old farm, yes, every shovelful, afterward revealed gems which since have decorated the crowns of monarchs."

As Eastern Catholics, we have "acres of diamonds" in our own backyard. We find so many of these "diamonds" in our spirituality, theology, and moral teaching, which convey to us, from one perspective or another, the very Word of God. This heavenly treasury of the Divine Word is presented to us most effectively in the showcase of our liturgical worship.

Like Ali Hafed, we are often foolishly looking to find the riches we desire in other places and other sources. Some look to the religions of the far east, yoga, Hindu or Buddhist meditation, or Native American spirituality (paganism). Others emphasize psychotherapy: Freud, Jung, the enneagram. Then there is pop-evangelicalism with its easy-believism, charisma, and prosperity gospel. Mind Science, Positive Mental attitude, "manifesting" prosperity, and obsessing over "success" are popular options. Some people go after psychics, fortune tellers, and the occult. All of these things are traps, distractions, diversions. We are already spiri-

tual millionaires; we have our Catholic Faith. We find our riches in our own "backyard."

At every Divine Liturgy, we hear readings from the divine scriptures. We sing liturgical hymns and poetry rich with profound theology. We are united to Christ Himself in the Most Holy Eucharist. It seems that we are not drawing from our Christian experience the riches available to us, so we wander into other things. Perhaps we do not realize that God is speaking to us. Our worship experience can be a personal encounter with God, an opportunity to hear God Himself speak to us.

Saint Ambrose said, "We speak to Him when we pray; we listen to Him when we read the divine oracles." When we pray, we talk to God; God speaks to us when we read the scriptures. To expand this truth: In the Liturgy, when we hear the Epistle and the Gospel, the homily, the psalm verses, the liturgical hymns, the words of the Anaphora, the responses of the faithful, the prayers of the deacon or priest, we are hearing God speak to us, at least potentially. Sadly, many times we aren't paying attention.

"The liturgical celebration manifests the mystery of the Word of God and gives it its highest degree of effectiveness," says Father Pierre Jounel. Have you ever been at the Divine Liturgy and experienced the living word of God in something you heard in the Epistle, the Gospel, the homily, the prayers? From what you heard, from what stood out to you, you received from heaven some encouragement, some discernment, some correction, some specific direction in a decision in life. This kind of thing shouldn't only happen once in a lifetime, or once every few years, but at every occasion of Liturgical worship. "Wisdom! Be Attentive!"

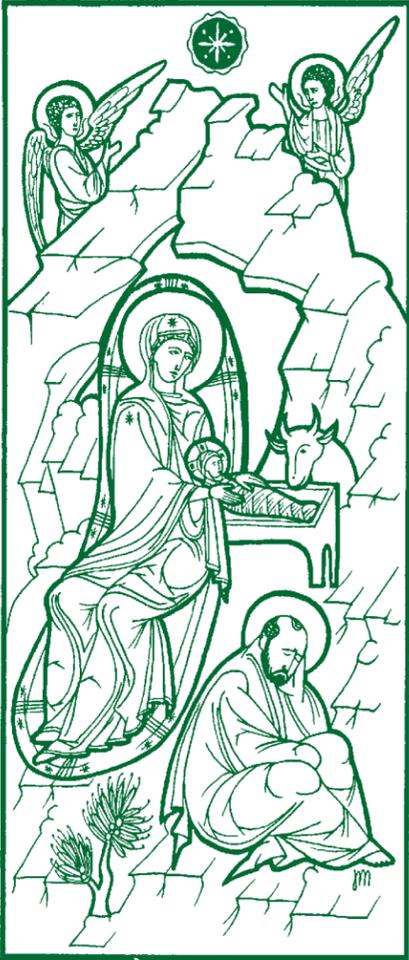
In the Armenian Liturgy, immediately before the proclamation of the Gospel, the deacon intones, "Be attentive," and the people answer, "It is God who speaks." Yes, in the Epistle, in Gospel, in the liturgical texts, it is God who speaks to us, and in the Sacraments, in the Eucharist, it is God who acts. Let us look nowhere else for that spiritual nourishment for which our souls long. Russell Conwell says, "Dig in your own backyard!" **ECL**

SCHOOL OF PRAYER

Father G. Scott Boghossian



SPIRITUAL MILLIONAIRES



SEASONAL REFLECTIONS

Father Ronald Hatton



“WHEN THE FULLNESS OF TIME HAD COME...”

the time of Jesus' birth that “the context of world history was important for Luke.... For the first time, there is a great expanse of peace in which everyone's property can be registered and placed at the service of the wider community.” An inscription at Priene, in Ionia, from 9 B.C. said of the birth of Augustus: “Providence, which has ordered all things, filled this man with virtue that he might benefit mankind, sending him as a Savior both for us and our descendants.... The birthday of the god was the beginning of the good tidings that he brought forth for the world. From his birth, a new reckoning of time must begin” (Chapter 3, pg. 59). Sounds very similar to our understanding of Christ at His Incarnation, doesn't it?

“When Augustus became supreme ruler of the world, the many kingdoms among the people came to an end. Likewise, when You became incarnate of the Immaculate One, the worship of many gods had to cease. The cities came under a universal power, and the Gentiles believed in the one supreme Divinity. Nations were registered in the name of Caesar Augustus, and we, the faithful, were registered in Your divine name, O Incarnate One. O Lord, great is Your mercy; glory to You!” (At Psalm 140, Vespers for the Feast of the Nativity)

When I read this, it struck me that I had read this sentiment elsewhere. In fact, it was in the words of Pope Benedict XVI in his little book, *Jesus of Nazareth: The Infancy Narratives*. In it, he says of

The world has always looked for a savior. We look to political figures time and time again, and are disappointed when we find that they have “feet of clay.” We put our hope and faith in socio-economical systems, from capitalism to anarchy, hoping to find peace in the world. It is no wonder that the writer of that inscription held out so much for the world because of Caesar Augustus. It is so sad that, at this season, so many people celebrate Christmas rather than actually celebrate the Nativity, the coming of our God into our world.

It is said that other feasts of the Church, Pascha and Theophany, are much older than our celebration of Jesus' birth, but we should not take that to mean that Christmas is of less importance. The Incarnation is so important in making

these feasts possible that the Nativity, even in the popular celebration, has taken such a deep hold in the hearts of all. No matter if a person is a believer or not, this season has become a time for thinking about others rather than ourselves, giving gifts, outreach into our communities, and so on. Food drives, clothing drives, even placing coins and bills into the pots of Salvation Army workers is a sign of a change of heart in most people, even if only for this season. The cries for peace between people and countries become louder and persistent. And at the heart of it all is not a spontaneous burst of goodwill but a deep response to the Gift given to us this season. “For God so loved the world....” God taking flesh, becoming like one of us in everything except sin, is such a profound occurrence in human history that it affects everyone whether they believe or not. This deep, abiding need for a savior is part of who we are, whether we acknowledge it or not. Saint Augustine wrote, “You have made us for Yourself, and our heart is restless until it finds its rest in You.” So, it should not surprise us that the writer of the inscription at Priene expressed the desire for a savior, and saw it in Caesar Augustus. Mirroring the words of Augustine, we go from person to person, politician to politician, movement to movement, seeking a savior, and only becoming disillusioned when they fall through. We are restless until we find rest in the True Savior of the world, Jesus Christ, God-become-man. Even if we cannot accept God's gift to us in the Incarnation, even if we deny the existence of God or the Truth of His

Church, we are still restless, and will remain so, until we accept this Gift and fall into the arms of our loving God.

It is so easy for us to want to take this season away from those who do not believe, those who mis-use it. We can look at the partying, the drunkenness, the greed for physical gifts and mourn how Christmas has been paganized, but we should realize that, whether celebrated properly or improperly, Christ's birth is still having an impact on everyone. Even if we hear people trying to tear Christmas to shreds, we should recognize that even they cannot deny that something exceptional is happening once again this year. They may bridle when you wish them a Merry Christmas, but they cannot deny the power that is being celebrated. God has given all of mankind this season as an opportunity, year after year, to change themselves from self-centered to other-centered. It gives Christians, year after year, an opportunity to show forth the love of God to those in darkness and, hopefully, to extend their acts of mercy, kindness and love beyond defined point on our calendar. “But when the fullness of time had come, God sent His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to ransom those under the law, so that we might receive adoption. As proof that you are children, God sent the spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying out, ‘Abba, Father!’ So, you are no longer a slave but a child, and if a child then also an heir, through God” (Gal. 4:4-7). **ECL**

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MANIFESTING CARPATHO-RUSYN CULTURE AND HISTORY

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 Below are just a few examples from our eparchy

Below is a list of many of the Parishes of the Eparchy of Passaic which are Live streaming Divine Liturgy on Saturday, Sunday, and Holy Days. You may access the links to their streaming sites (Facebook, Youtube, etc.) on our website: www.eparchyofpassaic.com.

CONNECTICUT

Saint Nicholas Byzantine Catholic Church—Danbury, CT
 Saint John the Baptist—Trumbull, CT

NEW JERSEY

Cathedral of Saint Michael the Archangel—Passaic, NJ
 Assumption of the Virgin Mary (Saint Mary)—Trenton, NJ
 Our Lady of Perpetual Help—Toms River, NJ
 Our Lady of Perpetual Help—Toms River, NJ—Radio
 Saint Michael Byzantine Catholic Church—Perth Amboy, NJ
 Saint Nicholas Byzantine Catholic Church—Perth Amboy, NJ
 Saint Mary Byzantine Catholic Church—Hillsborough, NJ
 Saint Nicholas Byzantine Catholic Church—Dunellen, NJ
 Saints Peter and Paul Byzantine Catholic Church—Somerset, NJ
 Saint Mary Byzantine Catholic Church—Jersey City, NJ
 Saint John Byzantine Catholic Church—Bayonne, NJ
 Nativity of Our Lord Byzantine Catholic Church—East Brunswick, NJ
 Saint Thomas the Apostle Byzantine Catholic Church—Rahway, NJ
 Saint Elias Byzantine Catholic Church—Carteret, NJ
 Saint George Byzantine Catholic Church—Linden, NJ
 Saint George Byzantine Catholic Church—Newark, NJ

NEW YORK

Saint Andrew Byzantine Catholic Church—Westbury, NY
 Saint Nicholas Byzantine Catholic Church—White Plains, NY
 Saint Mary Byzantine Catholic Church—New York, NY
 Holy Spirit Byzantine Catholic Church—Binghamton, NY
 Resurrection Byzantine Catholic Church—Smithtown, NY

PENNSYLVANIA

Saint Michael Byzantine Catholic Church—Mont Clare, PA
 Saint Mary Byzantine Catholic Church—Wilkes-Barre, PA
 Saint Mary Pokrova Byzantine Catholic Church—Kingston, PA

Saint John Byzantine Church—Wilkes-Barre Twp., PA
 Saint Mary Byzantine Catholic—Mahanoy City, PA
 Saint John Byzantine Church—Wilkes-Barre, PA
 Saint John the Baptist Byzantine Catholic Church—Lansford, PA
 Saints Peter and Paul Byzantine Catholic Church—Bethlehem, PA
 Saint Nicholas Byzantine Catholic Church—Old Forge, PA
 Saint Mary Byzantine Catholic Church—Taylor, PA
 Saints Peter and Paul Byzantine Catholic Church—Minersville, PA
 Saint Michael Byzantine Catholic Church—Dunmore, PA
 Saint Mary Byzantine Catholic Church—Hazleton, PA
 Saint John Byzantine Catholic Church—Hazleton, PA
 Holy Ghost Byzantine Catholic Church—Jessup, PA
 Our Lady of Perpetual Help Byzantine Catholic Church—Levittown, PA
 Saint Mary Byzantine Catholic Church—Scranton, PA
 Saint Ann Byzantine Catholic Church—Harrisburg, PA

GEORGIA

Epiphany of Our Lord Byzantine Catholic Church—Roswell, GA

VIRGINIA

Ascension of Our Lord Byzantine Catholic Church—Williamsburg, VA
 Our Lady of Perpetual Help Byzantine Catholic Church—Virginia Beach, VA
 Epiphany of Our Lord Byzantine Catholic Church—Annandale, VA

FLORIDA

Holy Dormition Byzantine Catholic Church—Ormond Beach, FL
 Saint Nicholas of Myra Byzantine Catholic Church—Orlando FL
 Saint Anne Byzantine Catholic Church—New Port Richey, FL
 Saint Cyril and Methodius Byzantine Catholic Church—Fort Pierce, FL
 Our Lady of the Sign Byzantine Catholic Church—Coconut Creek, FL

NORTH CAROLINA

Saints Cyril & Methodius Byzantine Catholic Church—Cary, NC
 The Outreach Community of Greater Charlotte

SOUTH CAROLINA

Charlotte, NC, Byzantine Catholic Mission at Fort Mill, SC

MARYLAND

Patronage of the Mother of God Byzantine Catholic Church—Arbutus, MD
 Saint Gregory of Nyssa Byzantine Catholic Church—Beltsville, MD

Are you called to the Priesthood?
Are you afraid of College Debt?

Is God calling you to be priest? Are you worried about college debt? Why not study in Europe and avoid college debt? Would you like to study in Vienna in the heart of Europe at the International Theological Institute in your own English Language? You can receive a university degree approved by the Pope. Contact the Director of Vocations for the Eparchy of Passaic, the Very Reverend Michael Kerestes at Saint Mary Byzantine Catholic Church, 695 N Main Street, Wilkes-Barre, PA 18705, phone: 570-822-6028



UPCOMING EPARCHIAL AND PARISH EVENTS

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DECEMBER, 2021

- 6 Our Holy Father Nicholas of Myra
Solemn Holy Day
- 8 Maternity of the Holy Anna
Solemn Holy Day
- 12 Sunday of the Holy Forefathers
Second Sunday before Christmas
- 19 Sunday of the Holy Fathers
Sunday before Christmas
- 24–January 1 Christmas holiday
Chancery closed
- 25 Holy Nativity of Our Lord
*Holy Day of Obligation*Chancery closed*
- 26 Sunday after Christmas
Commemoration of David, Joseph, and James
- 27 Holy Protomartyr and Archdeacon Stephen
Solemn Holy Day Chancery closed*

JANUARY, 2022

- 1 Circumcision of Our Lord
*Solemn Holy Day * Chancery closed*

THE BYZANTINE CATHOLIC EPARCHY OF PASSAIC
 subscribes to the

*Charter for the Protection of
 Children and Young People*

adopted by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. The Eparchy, within all its parishes, institutions and programs, is committed to assuring a safe environment in ministry

for its children and young people that conforms to Charter requirements. For further information regarding the Eparchial Safe Environment Program please contact:

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