



# EASTERN CATHOLIC LIFE

Official Publication of the Byzantine Catholic Eparchy of Passaic

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MAY 2022

## BISHOP KURT VISITS FLORIDA PARISHES FOR PASCHA Flowery Pascha—Pascua Florida



Sunset on the Gulf of Mexico

At the first Pascha, Our Lord did some extensive traveling. Not only did He journey to Jerusalem, but, from Golgotha, He journeyed to Hades where He knocked the gates of Hell off their hinges. Then, He liberated the souls in prison there awaiting redemption. As our hymn says on Easter Sunday, “You, O King and Lord, have fallen asleep in the flesh as a mortal man, but, on the third day, You arose again. You have raised Adam from his corruption and made death powerless. You are the Pasch of incorruption. You are the salvation of the world.” Returning to Jerusalem, He reunited with His human body and visited His family and disciples in both Jerusalem and at the Sea of Galilee. Saint John, an eyewitness, describes not only finding the tomb empty together with Saint Peter, but also the appearance of Jesus in the locked upper room in Jerusalem, and then having breakfast on the beach of Galilee, at which Our Lord manifested His bodily resurrection by eating charbroiled fish with them. If you ever get to visit the Holy Land, most people especially like the Sea of Galilee which is almost unchanged from the time of Jesus. Looking out on the sea one expects to see Our Lord walking on water. When I had the blessing of visiting there, I made certain to have some fish for breakfast!

This year for Holy Week, I visited Florida to try to make up for lost time with the lock down. Normally, it would take eight or nine plane tickets to visit all the parishes on Sundays, but during Holy

Week, I was able to visit six parishes in five days for major liturgical celebrations. There is a reason it is appropriate to visit Florida for Easter besides the weather. Did you ever wonder why it is called Florida? It appears the word is related to the word for “flowers” in the



Peter Paul Rubens, Abraham meets Melchizedek King of Salem, and Melchizedek, a priest of the most high God, brought out a sacrifice of bread and wine

Romance languages, and that is part of the answer. When the English found new lands or started new settlements, they named them after rich or powerful people, or after themselves. The Spanish, on the other hand, named lands and settlements based on the Holy Catholic Faith. Two of the first places that Christopher Columbus encountered he named San Salvador and El Salvador, that is “Holy Savior” and “The

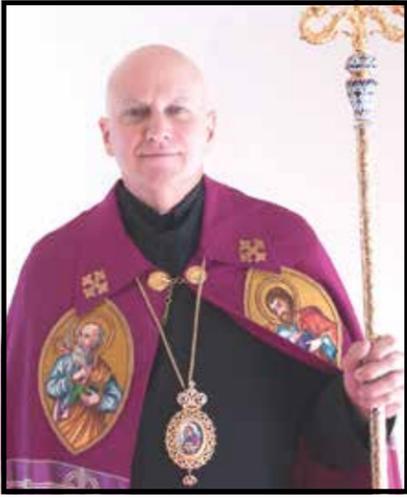
Savior”. The City of Los Angeles is actually named after Our Lady of the Angels. Sometimes the name was based on someone’s patron saint, and sometimes the calendar. One Spanish sea captain was in big trouble on the high seas and he thought he saw a cross in the sky. Following his vision, he arrived safely in a circular bay about thirteen miles across. His miraculous safe harbor was on the Feast of Corpus Christi, and so he named the bay Corpus Christi, and that is how my hometown got its name. In 1513, Ponce de Leon landed in Florida on Holy Thursday. Easter fell on April 6 that year. In Spanish, Easter is called “Pascua Florida” which means “flowery Pasch”. Wikipedia claims that it means “flowery feast”, but I think any literate Catholic or Orthodox would know that is inaccurate. “Pascua” is the same as “Pasch” or “Pascha”. In any case, although Florida is covered with tropical flowers, the state was named for Easter by Ponce de Leon.

Speaking of flowers, there is an entertaining book about Florida called *The*

in the swamps of Florida, “the orchid thief”. When I read this book, I first had my eyes opened to the destruction of the Native Americans in the United States in the nineteenth century. Most people don’t know that the United States government moved almost all the American Indians in the 48 states to destroy their power and identity. In the Southwest, the Spanish king gave deeds to the Indian nations, and so many of those were respected by the American government, and those nations still live on their ancestral lands. When Cardinal Pacelli took a plane flight across the United States, he was fascinated by these enormous stretches of seemingly empty land where these Indian nations still lived in the wilderness. Later on, when he became Pope Pius XII, he created the Diocese of Gallup, NM, because he believed that a bishop in a big city would not be a proper pastor for these flocks. Today, it is the poorest diocese in the United States and depends on donations from outside for financial life. When I was in seminary, the very holy Bishop of Gallup visited our seminary. I never imagined that someday I would be the only eastern Catholic pastor in New Mexico, the fourth largest state in the lower 48.

So, on Wednesday of Holy Week, I landed at Tampa International Airport, rented a car, and headed for New Port Richey for their evening service. At Saint Anne in New Port Richey, it was wonderful to see faces I had not seen for a couple years. One of the things that I love about our Church is that we make the grace of the Sacraments freely available. Historically in the west, one needed to be near death to receive the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick, although Saint James says simply in his Epistle, “Is anyone among you sick? He should call the presbyters of the church to pray over him and anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well. The Lord will raise him up. If he has sinned, he will be forgiven.” By tradition in our Church, everyone in the parish is allowed to receive this Sacrament once a year at the blessing of oil on Wednesday of Holy Week. It is a magnificent service with seven epistle readings, seven gospels, and seven prayers to bless the oil. Unfortunately, the service has been severely truncated

*continued on page 2*



## I LIFT UP MY EYES

Pastoral Reflections of Bishop Kurt



### Flowery Pascha—Pascua Florida

...continued from page 1



Buc-ee's Dayton Beach: 104 pumps

in most of our parishes. Nevertheless, it is one of the great blessings of our Church that so many are able to receive this great Mystery once a year. It was a pleasure to see Father Oleksiy and his wife and three daughters. Father Oleksiy is from a priestly family that goes back many generations, and his grandfather was a *confessor*, that is, he was sent to Siberia for refusing to renounce communion with Rome.

On Holy Thursday, I attended our Vespers and Divine Liturgy of Saint Basil the Great at our parish in Saint Petersburg, Saint Therese. As its name implies, Saint Petersburg does have some historical connection with Russian immigrants, and a visit to the oldest cemetery in the city reveals a large section of tombstones in Cyrillic letters and three-barred crosses. Oddly enough, my own great-great grandfather is buried in the same cemetery with his wife and son, although they were as far from Russian as can be. He was a Presbyterian pastor in OH who moved to FL later in life. He must have spun in his grave to find his great-great grandson a Catholic bishop who blessed his grave with holy water and prayed a *Panachida* for them. Did you know the first commercial air flight originated in Saint Petersburg, FL? The airport is popularly called the oldest commercial airport in the world, but, in fact, that flight was a seaplane or “flying boat” that took off from the central yacht basin. On January 1, 1914, the commercial flight took off from Saint Petersburg yacht basin flown by Tony Jannus with passenger A. C. Fell, a former mayor of Saint Petersburg. The airline was called Saint Petersburg-Tampa Airboat Line. At the beginning of the service, I presented Father Robert Evancho with a *jeweled cross* in recognition of his many years of faithful and dedicated service and leadership. I conspired with the cantor to surprise Father. Under the pretense of getting a bottle of water from the social hall (can you believe there is no water supply in the church?), I talked to the cantor outside the church to make sure he was ready to sing *Axios*.

On Good Friday, also called *Great Friday* in our tradition, I set out in the morning for Holy Dormition Parish in Ormond Beach, on the other side of the state, near Daytona Beach, on the Atlantic Ocean. The service was at three in the afternoon, so it seemed like a good journey from my base on the Gulf. We celebrated the Vespers and funeral procession with great solemnity. Afterwards, I went to dinner with Father Vince Brady, observing

the fast, of course. Father Brady made me aware of a remarkable gas station/convenience store called Buc-ee's. He associated the idea with me because it is from Texas, but it arose there long after I left Texas for good. The mascot is Bucky the Beaver. Father Vincent described it as being as big as a Wal-mart. Well, that was an exaggeration. It is not as big as a Wal-mart, but it was certainly the largest convenience store that I ever saw. Along with all the usual things, they sell their own smoked meats and sausages, including game, such as venison, and a great deal of merchandise

“The Villages” is the official name of the main city there. It is designed for people in their “golden years” and many parts are age restricted. It has many areas for social activities and many areas that are accessible by golf cart. The golf carts even have their own underpasses beneath the main roads. Many members of our own Church have retired to this community, and Father Oleksiy has been serving them with Divine Liturgy for some years. Our church there has been something of a pilgrim church, moving from location to location. For a long time, we met at a large Latin



Peter Paul Rubens, *Moses and the Manna in the Desert, Bread from Heaven*

featuring Bucky the Beaver. It has 104 gas pumps. That's right — one hundred four gas pumps. The Daytona Beach Buc-ee's is not the largest gas station in the world. That honor belongs to their station in New Braunfels, TX, on Interstate 35 with 68,000 square feet of store and 120 fuel stations. The first Buc-ee's opened in Clute, TX, in 1982. Since it was Good Friday, I did not try any of the venison sausage or jerky.

On Holy Saturday, I was able to visit two of our communities. Strangely enough, I celebrated Easter Sunday in the morning and Easter Vigil in the late afternoon. North of Orlando is a vast area called “the Villages”, although

Rite Catholic church. The church was so large that the area behind the altar formed a separate area for prayer which was quite large enough for us and very congenial. After a while though, the parish said we were no longer welcome there. The community then met for a while at an “Anglican” parish, but were recently locked out of there. You might think we were squatters, but in fact, we paid rent at these places. A sympathetic Lutheran Church took us in, and so on Holy Saturday morning, we celebrated the services for Easter morning there. I also checked out an abandoned country club that was for sale, hoping we might buy it for our church. It has almost one hundred acres and a club house, so it

already has utilities, etc. The building looked like it would be very expensive to make habitable again, so that is probably not a good option. We'll have to look some more.

After services, I drove down to North Fort Myers, where Father Steven Galuschick shares residency with an alligator in the pond. There we celebrated Vespers for Easter followed by the Divine Liturgy of Saint Basil the Great. It is an enthusiastic crowd there, though it has not fully recovered from the lockdowns. Liturgically, the blessing of baskets should be done after Easter morning services, but it is very common in our churches to do that after the Saturday evening services because of the modern practice of celebrating the sabbath early. So, we set out to bless the baskets in the hall, but the skies opened in a Florida deluge, so we blessed them from the porch while the baskets remained in the social hall. The Psalms talk about the “River of God,” which is the water above the heavens. The River of God certainly ran over its banks over North Fort Myers that evening.

Easter Sunday morning, I was off to Orlando for Matins and Divine Liturgy. There were two powerful cantors who sang in perfect unison. I did not realize that there were two of them until after the service. Because of their excellent singing, the full church sang at the top of their lungs, as the true custom in our tradition. It was truly a glorious Pascha. Father Sal Pignato still has more energy than I do, though he is well over 75. He also cares for the church in Miami which is a long way away. He is truly indefatigable. After services, he took us to a great restaurant where he ordered Baked Alaska for dessert. That pretty much sums up America, doesn't it: having Baked Alaska in Florida.

A few centuries ago, a clever theologian with an axe to grind by the name of John Calvin, began the process of splitting the Body of Christ into the many splinters we see today. Among his many grievous errors was his attack on the real presence of the Jesus in the Holy Eucharist. No one in the long history of Christianity did more to destroy the sacramental life of Christians, denying to millions of faithful the forgiveness of Confession and the saving Body and Blood of Jesus Christ in the Holy Eucharist. Luther set the so-called Reformation in motion by separating the Church in Germany from the rest of the Church. Then, Calvin provided the ideological framework to divide the Body of Christ into every conceivable division based on race, money, power, and so on, always claiming to be the “elect”. Christians in the United States are divided into tens of thousands of different denominations because of his doctrines, although ironically, he would probably have refused communion with almost all his followers if he came back today. There are not enough tears to cry for all the people who have been separated from Christ's loving sacraments by these heresies. In 1625, a Spanish princess, Isabella Clara Eugenia, asked the greatest artist of the Flemish baroque, Peter Paul Rubens, to create a series of art works celebrating



Statue in Banyan Tree

the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist and the true presence of the Body and Blood of Jesus in this Sacrament. If you visit Sarasota, FL, of all places, you can



Baked Alaska in Orlando

visit the great Ringling Art Museum, where five mammoth masterpieces by Rubens are on display. These huge oil paintings were produced as part of project that also included 20 tapestries for a convent in Madrid. I don't know how many people may have had their faith strengthened or perhaps regained by visiting this museum and walked unawares into this extravagant display of Catholic doctrine. Florida is a place filled with huge non-denominational "churches" where young adults join to be with other young adults like themselves and leave behind the faith of their ancestors for comfortable seats and rock concerts. How sad that these people never really knew the faith they were leaving behind. How sad that they no longer receive the Body and Blood of Christ in the Eucharist, and no longer receive the absolution from sin that Jesus offered in the upper room on the day of His Resurrection. But there is always new life in God's plan. In his mysterious plan, some of these wanderers may wander into the Ringling Art Museum and be reintroduced to the true faith by these works of art made by a Flemish painter for a Spanish princess battling the ancient heresies and proclaiming the true presence of Jesus in the Holy Eucharist.

+Kurt Bunette



Bishop Kurt next to a statue of Andy Warhol in Sarasota Art Gallery

**BYZANTINE CATHOLIC CHURCH**

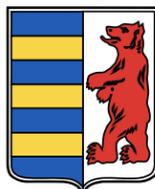
You are invited and welcome to join us for **DIVINE LITURGY (MASS) VIGIL EVERY SATURDAY 11AM** (Fulfils Sunday Obligation)

Celebrated by Fr. Oleksiy Nebesnyk at **Christ Lutheran Church 15699 SE 80th Ave. Summerfield, FL 34491**

For more information call 352-326-9831



Follow us for updates & live-stream [facebook.com/ByzantineCatholicVillages](https://facebook.com/ByzantineCatholicVillages)



**CARPATHO-RUSYN SOCIETY**

MANIFESTING CARPATHO-RUSYN CULTURE AND HISTORY

The Society offers many educational programs online at Carpatho-Rusyn Society You Tube. Also offered are genealogy presentations on Zoom and expert help in finding your roots. Our new addition is our Heritage Store, where you will find educational materials, maps, flags and accessories. We will constantly be adding more items.

*The mission of the Carpatho-Rusyn Society is to preserve and perpetuate the distinct culture, history, language, and heritage of the Carpatho-Rusyn people.*

Visit our website at [www.c-rs.org](http://www.c-rs.org) and click on "Get Involved" to become a member. For more information contact: Bonnie Burke, Southeast Coordinator at [bb@c-rs.org](mailto:bb@c-rs.org) or call 440 729-2045.

**Thank You!**

At press time, three quarters of a million refugees have arrived in the Eparchy of Uzhhorod/Mukachevo in southwest Ukraine. Most of them have traveled on to countries in the European Union, but over two hundred thousand are currently sheltered in Transcarpathia. Our Church is at the forefront of helping these people, mostly women and children who have left their fathers and husbands behind. Many have arrived without even a change of clothes. Bishop Nil Lushchak thanks the generous people who have sent money so far. The Eparchy of Passaic has already sent about \$250,000.00 from its own Bishop's Appeal and from the donations of individuals and organizations. In addition, Archbishop Skurla ordered a collection for the third Sunday of Lent, and that money has not yet been totalled. There is information on the eparchial website if you wish to send money to help. May God bless you abundantly!

**God With Us**

✠ ONLINE ✠

**2022 SPRING CURRICULUM**

**EASTERN CATHOLIC.ORG**

All courses are offered as live webinars, free of charge. Register at [EasternCatholic.org/Events](https://EasternCatholic.org/Events).



**HEAVEN ON EARTH**

The Beauty & Symbolism of the Divine Liturgy

Rev. David Anderson

Wednesdays, May 4 - 18 @ 8 - 9 p.m. ET

When pagans of Kiev entered Hagia Sophia and first experienced the Divine Liturgy, they famously said: "We knew not whether we were in heaven or on earth, for surely there is no such splendor or beauty anywhere on earth." Join us as Fr. David Anderson guides us to understand what the beauty of the Divine Liturgy reveals to us.



# PEOPLE YOU KNOW

## IN ROSWELL...

### Catechumens Brought Into the Catholic Church

On Holy Saturday evening, during the Saint Basil Vigil Liturgy, four catechumens entered into the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church through the Byzantine Rite at Epiphany of Our Lord Byzantine Catholic Church in Roswell, GA. John Gollner, Ricky Cantrell, Marion Cantrell, and Brian Cantrell publicly professed the Nicene Creed, were chrismated, and received the Most Holy Eucharist. All have been preparing for this joyous moment for some time as they studied the catechism and learned the theology behind the Divine Liturgy. Each went through their own process of discernment and journeyed on their own path to make this life-saving decision. But, all discerned their way, not just into the Catholic Church, but they made special discernment to desire to enter into the Byzantine expression of the Catholic Church from different Protestant backgrounds. We look forward to their continued discernment and growth as they settle into their new-found faith. May God grant them all, many happy and blessed years! Epiphany of our Lord Parish is administered by Father Lewis Rabayda, assisted by Deacon James Smith, and Deacon John Reed.

### Thomas Sunday Egg Hunt

On Thomas Sunday, Epiphany of Our Lord held a picnic with an Easter Egg Hunt for the children of the parish. Bunnies were present as well for all to hold and play with.



Women enjoy a good meal and conversation



Ileana Bragg helps the children hold bunnies



Deacon James Smith with Catechumens and witnesses



Children pet bunnies



Father Lewis chrismates John Gollner on the forehead



Parishioners enjoying a good meal



Father Lewis applies Chrism to Brian Cantrell's hands



Deacon John Reed, Father Lewis Rabayda (with bunny), and Deacon James Smith

# AROUND THE EPARCHY



## IN SMITH-TOWN...

### Resurrection Celebrates Parish Feast Day

On April 24, Saint Thomas Sunday, the Resurrection Community in Smithtown, NY, celebrated its own parish feast. The worship began with the celebration of Matins and continued with a solemn Liturgy for the parishioners and their families. At the end of the service there was a blessing of children and youth. "Artos," the bread symbolizing Christ, was also shared among all present.

Numerous parishioners and guests took part in the celebration. Special guests for the feast, who served the Matins and Liturgy together with the Father Vlad Budash, parish administrator, were Father Dennis Smolarski, SJ, from the West Province of Jesuits, and Canons of Saint Augustine from Long Island, NY, Father Daniel Nash and Father Elias Carr.



After the service, a generous dinner awaited all present. The children had a fun Easter egg hunt. Resurrection Parish had a wonderful opportunity to feel like a spiritual family.



## 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](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://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.



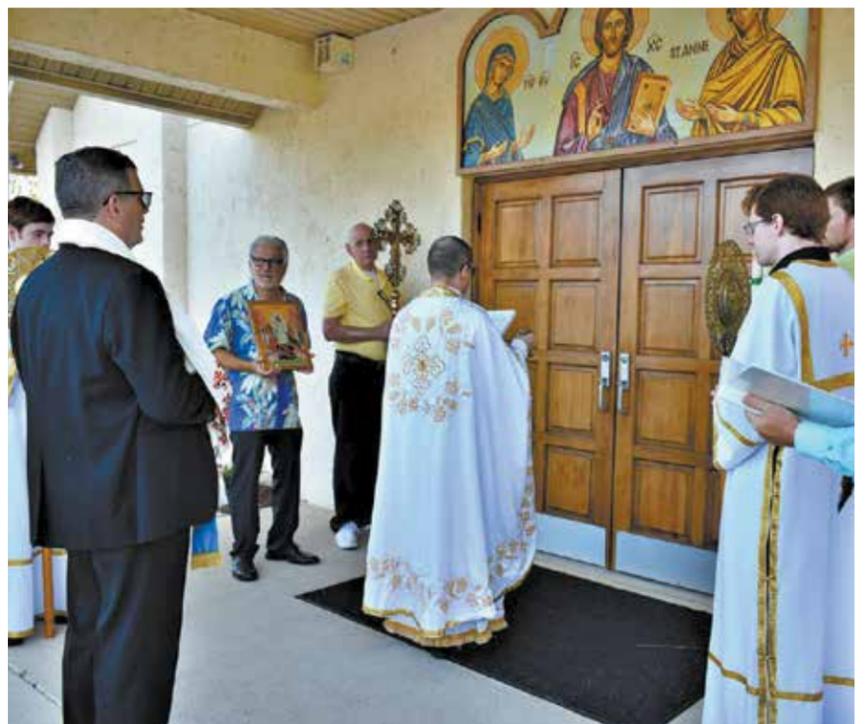
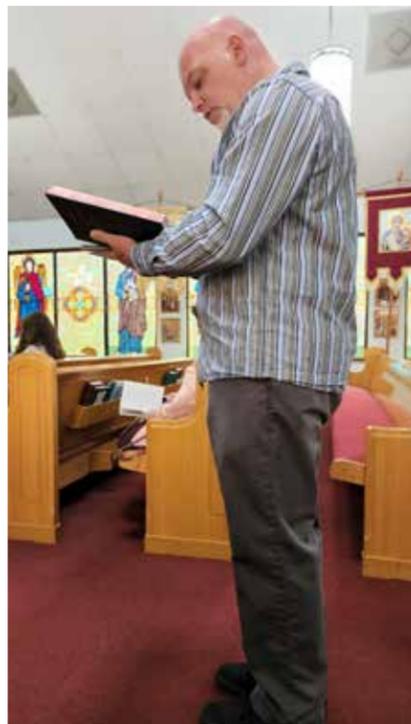
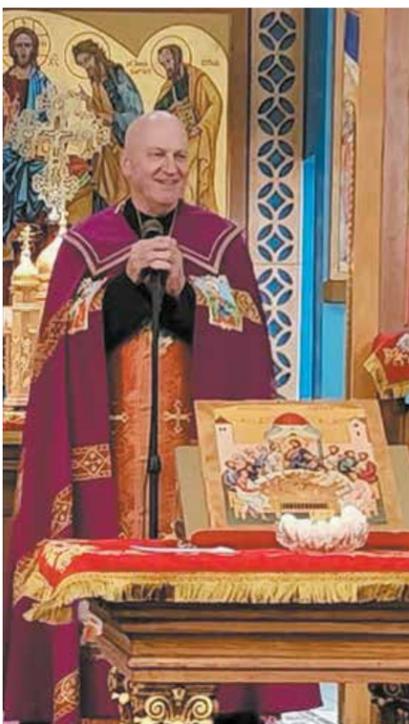
MORE FROM BISHOP KURT'S VISIT TO NEW PORT RICHEY AND THE VILLAGES, FLORIDA

IN THE VILLAGES...

This year's Paschal celebration brought with it many blessings we enjoyed: ornate baskets, delicious meats, a variety of dessert breads and rolls and, of course, a second visit to our mission by Bishop Kurt. As our growing community gathered to celebrate the Resurrection of our Lord, Bishop Kurt commended us for our growth and perseverance, which rekindled the flame for bringing others to the beauty of our traditions. We had a great time at the meal that followed at the hall, and thus extend our gratitude to the people of Christ Lutheran for offering to share a welcoming worship space. We ask you pray for our mission for continued growth and success.



IN NEW PORT RICHEY...



# COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND INTERFAITH PRAYERS UNITE WHAT IS GOOD

Article and photos submitted by Mary Anne Fedor, Saint Michael Catholic Church, Pittston



Father Andrii Dumnych prays and preaches at a Holy Hour on Tuesday, March 15, at the parish of Father Joseph Elston, Saint John the Evangelist Roman Catholic Church, Pittston

“The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom should I fear? The Lord is my life’s refuge; of whom should I be afraid?” The words of the 27<sup>th</sup> Psalm chosen and recited by Pastor Adam McGahee of Moving Rivers Ministries of Wilkes-Barre, PA, were among the inspired prayers offered for the people of Ukraine at an Interfaith Prayer Service at Saint Michael the Archangel Byzantine Catholic Church, Pittston, PA.

Saint Nicholas Byzantine Catholic Church, Swoyersville. Trusting wholeheartedly in the efficacy of community prayer, the faith leaders of the council prayed, chanted, and sang, and presented personal reflections, each in the expressions of their faith traditions. The church was filled with people sharing the common resolve to affect change through prayer, most notably to transform hardened hearts and desensitized souls. The unified support was proof



Rabbi Larry G. Kaplan (left) of Temple Israel, Wilkes-Barre, PA, recited the 23rd Psalm in Hebrew, followed by Reverend Doctor Robert Zanicky (right) of First Presbyterian Church, Wilkes-Barre, reciting the verse in English.



Pastor Adam McGahee of Moving River Ministries, Wilkes-Barre, recites the 27th Psalm and elaborated on the choices we have as individuals to make a difference.



Rabbi Eric Mollo of Temple B'nai B'rith, Kingston, PA, combined his musical talents with a talent for composing a masterful prayer at the Interfaith Service

The service was held on Monday, March 21 at 5 PM, and was organized by the Wyoming Valley Interfaith Council in coordination with Father Andrii Dumnych, pastor of Saint Michael Byzantine Church, Pittston, and

that the choice to do good is indeed the will of God as opposed to those who choose to do evil.

On cue, the bells of the church rang loud and strong at the start of the ser-



Father Eduard Shestak of Saint Nicholas Byzantine Church, Old Forge, candidly describes the harsh reality of life in war-torn Ukraine.

vice as a call to prayer with an introduction by Father Andrii. Among the first of eleven to present was Rabbi Larry G. Kaplan of Temple Israel, Wilkes-Barre. He chanted the 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm (“The Lord is my Shepherd”) in Hebrew, followed in English by Rev. Dr. Bob Zanicky, First Presbyterian Church, Wilkes-Barre. Marianne Sailus, chaplain at the VA Medical Center in Wilkes-Barre, softly chanted the Beatitudes from the New Testament (Matthew 5: 3-12). Dr. Ibrahim Almeky, Imam for the Islamic Association of Northeastern Pennsylvania, and a local physician, prayed in Arabic for an end to oppression of all faiths and for support and protection of the people of Ukraine. Rabbi Eric Mollo, of B’nai B’rith, Kingston, memorialized his Ukrainian Jewish ancestry and delivered a most eloquent prayer. He followed with a stirring liturgical Hebrew song while playing guitar. The song was “Oseh Shalom,” from the Jewish prayer book: “May the One who makes peace on earth, grant peace to Israel and all the inhabitants of the world, Amen.”

Inspiring prayers and readings continued as offered by Father Joseph Elston, Saint John the Evangelist Roman Catholic Church, Pittston; Deacon Sergei Kapral, Holy Resurrection Russian Orthodox Cathedral of Wilkes-Barre; and Father Russ McDougall, C.S.C., King’s College, Wilkes-Barre.

Father Andrii led a Moleben in traditional chant with the cantors serving his two parishes. It was an honor to also have as a guest presenter Father Eduard Shestak, JCL, of Saint Nicholas Byzantine Catholic Church, Old Forge. Like many of the immigrant priests in our Eparchy of Passaic, Father Eduard is in communication with family and friends in Ukraine, getting first-hand accounts of the crisis. Father Eduard illustrated the magnitude of stress and loss of normalcy in Ukraine in this way: “It is the 26<sup>th</sup> day in Ukraine. There is no February, there is no March, no Monday, no Tuesday, no Sunday. They count days only from February 24. Time has stopped. Time has ended. Everything changed in life and starts from zero.”

In closing the service, Father Andrii reminded all that triumph is what we strive for, not only in this life but for eternity. It is prayer that unites us in hope. He emphasized that our prayers hold up the people of Ukraine, giving them the ability to persevere. “Prayer is working even though we don’t see prayer. We see the consequences of our prayers. And prayer gives strength.”

In addition to the interfaith service, Father Andrii served as guest preacher on Tuesday, March 15 at a “Holy Hour for Peace in Ukraine”. It was held at Saint John the Evangelist Church in Pittston, where Father Joseph P. Elston is pastor. Holy hours were held simultaneously that same day at 5:00 p.m. in all Roman Catholic Churches in the Diocese of Scranton at the request of Bishop Joseph Bambera. Many of Father Andrii’s parishioners attended.

As suggested by Bishop Kurt, monetary donations and supplies for refugee relief were collected at Saint Michael and Saint Nicholas churches for humanitarian relief. But these efforts are ongoing and have expanded beyond the parish level. In working with many community and faith leaders and other Catholic churches as well, Father Andrii has taken the needs of refugees and Ukraine to others through outreach programs, radio and speaking events at schools and colleges and the response has been inspiring. A second Interfaith meeting about Ukraine was held on May 9, at Saint Michael Church as a thank-you to everyone for their generosity. We can see that people of all faiths and backgrounds are more than willing to assist others in need, those who are suffering. Likewise, when we trust in God and move beyond our comfort zone, all of us can do amazing things. And as Christians, we bring the message of Christ to others through our actions, in what they see in us. This is a calling for each of us. As all of us continue our prayers and our works of charity, we look forward to different circumstances. We pray for Ukraine and its people; for a time when peace and freedom reign equally for all.



# LIFE, LOVE, AND THE HUMAN PERSON

By Ann M. Koshute, MTS

## THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD

Summer is preparing to make its debut just a month from now, but we're continuing our walk through the springtime of Pascha. This holy season lasts for fifty days, much longer than any period of fasting on our liturgical calendar, because the Resurrection is a celebration that needs to be fully appreciated by us, to sink into our bones and animate our lives going forward. Yet much of "the world" has moved on, living in the darkness of not knowing the gift of the Cross and Resurrection, or worse yet, indifferent to them. Try wishing a shop clerk, or even a friend or family member a hearty, "Happy Easter!" next time you're out and about, and they'll wonder if you got hit on the head and lost your memory. Indeed, the world, and perhaps even we, have moved on.

In Her wisdom, our Church dedicates the fourth Sunday of Pascha to the Samaritan Woman. She is the woman who finds Jesus alone at the well. The woman is there alone, too, surprised to see another person – much less a man – there in the heat of the day. All the other women come to draw water early, but this woman comes when no one else will be there. She was no doubt uncomfortable, carrying back a heavy jar of water, the sun beating down on her. She is also heavy with the emotional and spiritual "baggage" she carries. Her encounter with Jesus exposes that baggage, and it is eventually "unpacked"

through His gentle compassion and firm call to amend her life. This part of the story – their surprise encounter, His questions, her defensiveness, and the eventual conversion the woman experiences – is important. I recommend listening carefully when this Gospel (John 4:4-42) is chanted, and even spending time with it on your own. Put yourself there at the well, in the place of the Samaritan Woman, and have a frank conversation with our Lord. As you contemplate the scene you may be surprised by what He says to you – and by your responses to Him.

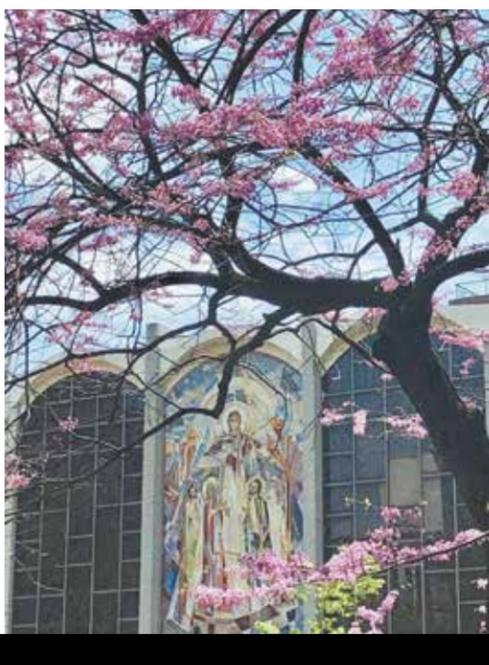
What I want to focus on here is not the Samaritan Woman's encounter and conversion, but what happens after. Saint John tells us that this meeting with Jesus, and the promise of a new life in Him, changed her so profoundly that, she "left her water jar and went into the town," (incredible, since she did her very best to avoid the gossip and condemnation of her neighbors), "and said to the people, 'Come and see a man who told me everything I have done. Could He possibly be the Messiah?'" (v. 28-29) Meeting Jesus was a turning point for this woman, and He impacted her so radically that she didn't care what the people in the town thought of her, didn't think about how they might treat her, and she didn't need the water she'd collected in her jar, because she tasted the water of new life that Jesus offered her. We don't know

what she thought when she ran to tell everyone in the town about Jesus, but we can imagine that they were as surprised as we might have been to see the village outcast so boldly and unashamedly proclaiming the Messiah. What's even more incredible is that *they believed her*. Tradition tells us that the Woman at the Well came to be known as Photini, "the enlightened one," not only because she herself had "seen the light," so to speak. She *brought the Light* to the people in the village that day and carried the Light to others for the remainder of her life.

Most of us were babies when we were baptized, so we don't remember what that experience was like. But if we were baptized as an adult, or have witnessed a baptism, we know that water is the "matter" of the Holy Mystery (the Living Water of Christ). The godparents of the newly initiated (if an infant) receive a candle on his or her behalf, a sign that this new Christian is to carry the Light of Christ into the world. Once she had been "baptized" by the Living Water offered by Jesus, Photini could do nothing other than carry Light she just received to anyone who would hear her. Once she "died" to her former life and received a new one, Photini couldn't imagine extinguishing the Light, or refusing to share it.

Jesus tells us that He, Himself, is "the light of the world" (John 8:12), and

this is the Light with which Photini was enlightened, and which she passed on to the townspeople that day. But Jesus also says that *we* are "the light of the world." (Matthew 5:14). What feels like a contradiction at first makes perfect sense when we consider Photini's conversion and how it compelled her to proclaim Christ for the rest of her life; and in how we understand our baptism, and the new life and Light we were given not only for ourselves, but to *light up* the world. How generous is our God, Who shares His Light with us and *entrusts us with it so that we can be a light* to others! As we hear the Gospel on the fourth Sunday of Pascha and contemplate the incredible conversion of the Woman at the Well, who allowed *the Light* to transform her into Photini, let's consider our own light. Is it burning with fierceness, or flickering weakly? Are we fanning the flame with the breath of the Spirit, or have we let the light all but go out? Will we allow the light to transform us, or simply burn out? Let's go to the well where Jesus wants to meet us. It could be our memory, which must be healed, or our sins to be forgiven. The well may be the place where we feel insecure, are holding a grudge, or simply feel lost. Meet Him at that well, pour out your heart, and receive the Light only He can give. And then...pass it on. **ECL**



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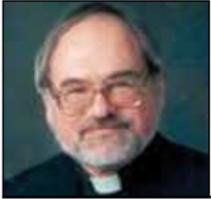
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# THE BYZANTINE LITURGY

By Archpriest David Petras, SEOD

## BAPTISM: THE BLESSING OF WATER

In the celebration of the sacramental mystery of baptism, after the renunciation of Satan, the evil one, and our commitment to Christ, we process to the baptismal font, to the living water that will make the candidate a child of God, and bring them into the life of the Trinity. Arriving at the font, the first action is to sanctify the water to be used, not by our limited human powers, but by the action of the Holy Spirit. Saint Cyril of Alexandria explains most clearly, "In the same way as water boiling in the kettle by the touch of the heat of fire out of which it draws its power, so is water changed by the energy of the Spirit into an infinite divine might, which sanctifies those who descend into it." (*On John II, 1*) In this we see the wondrous power and love of God, Who uses one of the simplest elements of our life, water, which nourishes and cleanses our bodies, and which, in fact, makes up the greatest part of our bodies, to bring about a complete transformation of our whole being on both the spiritual and material levels.

This is a mystery which surpasses our understanding. The element of water is an essential part of the sacramental mystery. It is both a reality and a symbol at the same time. Outwardly, it is a symbol, a person with faith in baptism sees water with the eyes of the body, but with the eyes of faith sees our cleansing from sin and life in God. Saint John Chrysostom preached clearly, "The unbeliever, hearing of a bath (of baptism), thinks it is only water; I, on the other hand, consider not only what

is seen, but the purification of the soul by the Holy Spirit." (Homily on I Corinthians 1, n. 7) God, therefore, acts in the substance of water, and through the gestures and words of our blessing, they become the reality of God's salvation itself. The baptismal waters, therefore, are the waters of the Jordan touched by Christ, and upon which the Holy Spirit has reposed. In the great prayer of blessing, we hear: "For You sanctified the waves of Jordan, You sent down your Holy Spirit from heaven and crushed the heads of the serpents that lurked there. Therefore, O loving King, be present now in the visitation of Your Holy Spirit and sanctify this water."

Therefore, the first action of the order of the baptismal rite at the font is the blessing of water. The deacon introduces the blessing with the Litany of Peace as a priest reads a prayer quietly, "O compassionate and merciful God, you alone search the heart and soul ...," a private prayer of preparation. As in the prayer of the Cherubikon in the Divine Liturgy, the priest protests his own unworthiness and asks God for forgiveness and salvation: "Wash away the filth of my body and the stain of my soul and make all my being holy and perfect by your unseen power and your spiritual right hand, that while I proclaim freedom and offer it to others by the perfect faith of your unspeakable love for humanity, I myself may not be found an abandoned slave of sin .... strengthen me for the ministry of this great and heavenly mystery." Special petitions for the blessing of water and for the baptism of

the candidates are included. There is a great variety in the texts of these petitions in the different branches of the Byzantine Church, indicating that they are of more recent origin. The Litany then concludes with the Great Blessing of Water for baptism. This prayer is important because the substance of water used in the sacramental mystery is filled with the power of the Spirit to grant rebirth.

I mention here the Great Blessing of Water. The Ruthenian *Small Trebnik* contains the prayer for blessing that, in all other baptismal orders, is the prayer used in emergency baptisms. Perhaps this is because it has a slightly shortened version of the rite. It should be recommended that the Great Prayer of Blessing be used, and this was probably the intention of the Church when the full rite would be restored. Likewise, water should be blessed at every baptism, and the pre-sanctified Theophany water not be used. Indeed, it is clear that if the preferred method of baptism is used – immersion – then the water must be blessed for each occasion. For baptism by immersion, a sufficient amount of water must be blessed.

In baptism, we turn from evil and toward the good. Water itself also has a bad and good aspect. Water can be dangerous, we can drown in water, but yet it is not only good, but necessary for life. Therefore, when water is blessed, the evil is expelled from it. This theme of baptism as a struggle against Satan carried through the whole rite. At the

blessing of water, the priest prays, "We pray you, O Lord ... do not let a demon of darkness hide itself in this water, and do not let an evil spirit, bringing hidden purpose and rebellious thoughts, go down into it with the one who is being baptized." We then pray for the water to become a source of life, as our Lord promised to the Samaritan woman, "If you knew the gift of God and who is saying to you, 'Give me a drink,' would have asked him and he would have given you living water." (John 4:10) The priest prays, "Now, O Master of all, declare this water to be water of redemption, water of sanctification, cleansing of flesh and spirit, loosening of bonds, forgiveness of transgressions, enlightenment of soul, washing of rebirth, renewal of spirit, gift of adoption, garment of incorruption, source of life."

In the early centuries, the substance of the sacramental mysteries was identified with the sacraments themselves. The East emphasized this. Gregory of Nyssa said that water becomes by its blessing an "instrument of regeneration." In the Byzantine Rite, therefore, the blessing of water functions like the anaphora: the anaphora consecrates bread and wine to become the body and blood of Christ, while water is consecrated by the Holy Spirit to become the life-giving element of rebirth. However, water was never considered transformed like the eucharistic mysteries. The anaphora, therefore, precedes the individual Communion, and the blessing of water precedes the individual water baptism. **ECL**

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Most Reverend Bishop Kurt Burnette  
*President and Publisher*  
Father James Badeaux, *Editor*  
Father Ronald Hatton, *Associate Editor*  
Father Lewis Rabayda, *Layout Editor*  
Mrs. Maureen French, *Circulation Editor*  
([mfrench@eparchyofpassaic.com](mailto:mfrench@eparchyofpassaic.com))

E-Mail us at:  
**ECL@eparchyofpassaic.com**

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## SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES

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

### THE SONG OF HABAKKUK: THE FOURTH BIBLICAL ODE

The *Irmos* (first stanza) of the fourth Ode of the Paschal Canon by Saint John Damascene prays: “Let Habakkuk, speaking in behalf of God, stand with us at the divine watch. Let him show us the brilliant angel who proclaims: ‘Today salvation comes to the world for Christ, being almighty, is risen.’” It’s not that Habakkuk explicitly predicted the angel at the tomb or even the Resurrection for that matter. It’s rather that the fourth Ode of every Canon shows some link to the poetic prayer we find in the third chapter of Habakkuk’s prophetic book, a poem once sung at Matins.

Habakkuk prophesied in the final years of the 7<sup>th</sup> century BC, just as the Babylonian empire had conquered the Assyrian capital of Nineveh (612 BC) and defeated an Assyrian-Egyptian alliance at the battle of Carchemish (605). Good King Josiah of Jerusalem died in a battle against the Egyptians in 609 (2 Kings 23; 2 Chronicles 35), ending a period of reform. Scripture sees the fall of Jerusalem to the Babylonians (587) as God’s punishment for the rampant corruption and idolatry among His people that followed.

In all this turmoil, the prophet turns to God with two questions we all ask: Why do the wicked seem to go unpunished? Why does God let violence happen? (Habakkuk 1). He resolves to await God’s answer and to allow his limited view of current events to be corrected by God’s perfect knowledge (Habakkuk 2:1). This stance, which reminds us of the long-suffering Job, is an excellent model for our own prayer: to say what’s really on our minds and then to await the Lord’s reply with patient faith.

The Lord responds with five pronouncements of “woes” on various types of sinners (Habakkuk 2:5-20). The Lord’s reply reassures Habakkuk that there will be a reckoning for sinners while “the righteous shall live by faith” – a key text in Saint Paul’s preaching (Habakkuk 2:4; Romans 1:17; Galatians 3:11). The chapter ends with a statement that can be read as threatening or consoling depending on one’s own conscience: “The Lord is in His holy temple. Let all the earth keep silent before Him” (2:20).

Habakkuk’s poetic prayer reacts by praising the Lord’s power in historical events and especially in natural phenomena. Evoking thunder and lightning, whirlwinds and churning waters, earthquakes and landslides, the prophet reasserts the Lord’s power as the creator and sustainer of all reality. At the same time, he refers to God’s interventions on behalf of His chosen people, in the miraculous crossing of the Red Sea and the Jordan (3:8), and in victories over particular enemies (3:7.13.14). These two themes are interwoven: the standstill of the sun and moon (3:11), for example, recalls a miracle during Joshua’s battle against the Amorites as part of Israel’s conquest of the Land (Joshua 10:12-13). The prophet concludes with an expression of resolute faith: however bad things may get, “Yet I will rejoice in the Lord; I will find joy in the God of my salvation. The Lord is my strength” (3:18). Interpreters generally read the violent images as describing the final judgment at the end of the world. Saint Hesychius of Jerusalem, however, identifies many individual details as pointing to Christ’s Crucifixion.

Habakkuk’s song literally demands a Christian interpretation: the Prophet says that all of God’s acts of power were “for the salvation of Your people; for the salvation of Your Anointed (3:13; *Messiah* in Hebrew). The text most often quoted from Habakkuk says: “God comes from Teman; the Holy One from Mount Paran” (3:3). Teman points south to Sinai, where the Lord gave the Law to Moses. The Greek Septuagint version of the Old Testament (made by Jews in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC) explained the more obscure name, “Paran,” as “overshadowed by leafy trees.” Recall that the prophet, Daniel, described the coming of the Messiah into the world as “a stone not hewn by human hand” coming away from a mountain (Daniel 2:34). Recall, too, how the archangel Gabriel explained Mary’s conception: “the power of the Most High will overshadow you” (Luke 1:35; the same Greek word is used in Habakkuk 3:3). Gathering these details together, the Church sees here a prediction of the Virgin birth of Jesus Christ.

The fourth Ode of the Christmas Canon, like many others, refers to the “overshadowed mountain.” Sometimes, as in the Paschal Canon, the poet seizes on the theme of watching and waiting for the Lord (2:1). The Canon of Theophany sees the revelation of the Trinity in God’s “voice upon the waters” (3:8-10), while the Canon of Pentecost points to the Final Judgment. **ECL**

## SCHOOL OF PRAYER

Father G. Scott Boghossian



### AN APOSTLE MUST BE A WITNESS TO CHRIST'S RESURRECTION

Every Easter season, the liturgical readings remind us of how the Apostles saw the Risen Christ; they spoke to Him and experienced His goodness, His power, and His love.

The disciples’ hearts on the way to Emmaus burned within them as they heard the mysterious stranger explain the Scriptures and then reveal Himself “in the breaking of the bread.”

Jesus tells Thomas: “Put your finger here and see my hands; put out your hand and place it in my side” (Jn. 20:27).

In Luke 24, Jesus said, “‘see my hands and my feet, that it is I; handle me and see; for a spirit has not flesh and bones as you see that I have.’ And when He had said this, He showed them His hands and His feet” (38-40).

Saint Paul assures the Church at Corinth around AD 57 that the risen Christ appeared to Peter, the twelve Apostles, and five hundred other men. Saint Paul also personally witnessed the resurrected Christ (1 Cor. 15:3-8).

Jesus presented Himself alive to His Apostles after His death on the cross

“by many proofs” (Ac. 1:3) so that they could be convincing eyewitnesses of His life, death, and glorious resurrection.

After the ascension, the Apostles gathered to choose a replacement for Judas. The candidate for the position had to have been with Jesus from His baptism until His resurrection and ascension. Most importantly, the replacement Apostle had to have seen the risen Jesus Christ. The footnote for Acts 1:22 in the RSV Catholic edition says, “An apostle must be a witness to Christ’s resurrection.”

While there are no Apostles on earth anymore, the work of the Apostles continues today. The sacrament of holy orders is the sacrament of apostolic ministry (CCC 1536). Bishops, priests, and deacons continue the apostolic ministry of announcing the Gospel. The laity are also entrusted with the apostolic ministry (the apostolate) and have the right and the duty to work in sharing the saving message of Christ’s death and resurrection (CCC 900).

Therefore, bishops, priests, deacons, and laypeople are commanded to preach the Gospel and rescue souls

from sin, death, and hell. But to be an apostle – to exercise the apostolate – we also must encounter the risen Christ. We must be true “witnesses” of His resurrection in as much as we have experienced the realities of the faith we profess. We must know Jesus. He must be real to us.

Have you experienced the risen Christ? Do you know that He is alive? To have encountered Jesus, know Him, love Him, and serve Him will enable us to draw souls to Him. Sadly, many Catholics, perhaps even some bishops, priests, and deacons, have never encountered or experienced the risen Christ. Because of this, we don’t attract the multitudes to “the Way” (Ac. 9:2).

Faith, repentance, baptism, the state of sanctifying grace, and final perseverance are required to get to heaven. But to win souls, impact the world around us, and effectively proclaim the Gospel require something more. To be an apostle and bring others to Christ, we must have encountered Him. “An apostle must be a witness to Christ’s resurrection.” We must be people of deep conviction. We must be aflame with love and zeal for the person of Jesus Christ.

Saint Symeon the New Theologian (949-1022) tells us that we can experience Christ. While He acknowledges that we “walk by faith and not by sight” (2 Cor. 5:7), he insists that there is a deeper relationship with Christ that is available to us, even in this life, if we seek His face earnestly in prayer, self-denial, the endurance of hardships, and fraternal charity. For Symeon, it is even possible to see Jesus Christ in this life.

Symeon writes, “Do not say that men cannot perceive the divine light, or that it is impossible in this age! Never is it found to be impossible, my friends. On the contrary, it is entirely possible when one desires it - but only to those whose life has been purified of passion or whose eye of the mind has been cleansed.”

“Let us cleanse our senses that we may see the risen Christ in the glory of his resurrection and clearly hear Him greeting us: ‘Rejoice!’ – as we sing the hymn of victory. Christ is risen from the dead!” (Paschal Canon – Ode 1). **ECL**

# SEASONAL REFLECTIONS

Father Ronald Hatton



## BE EXALTED ABOVE THE HEAVENS, O GOD

“And when [Jesus] had said this, as they were looking on, He was lifted up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. And while they were gazing into heaven as He went, behold, two men stood by them in white robes, and said, ‘Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, Who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw Him go into heaven.’” (Acts 1:9-11)

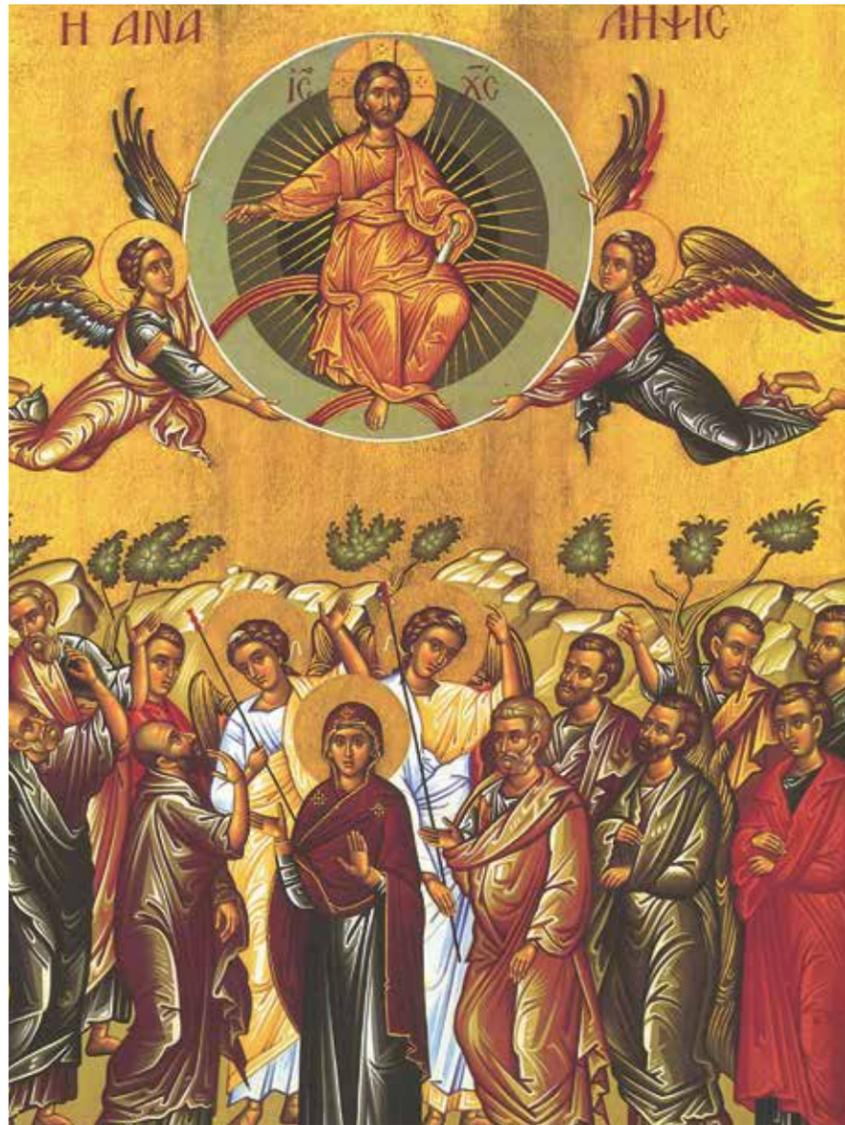
“The Lord ascended into heaven to send the Comforter into this world. The heavens prepared His throne and clouds were His ladder; the angels marveled at the sight of a man more exalted than themselves. Today, the Father receives again in His bosom the One Who was in Him from all eternity, and the Holy Spirit gives a command to all the angels: Lift up your lintels, O you gates! O you nations of the earth, clap your hands, for Christ ascends to the place He had been from all eternity!”

“O loving Jesus, while You lived on earth, You were God inseparable from the Father, and You truly shared our humanity. Ascending in glory today from the Mount of Olives, through Your great love You lifted up our fallen nature and enthroned it with the Father on high. Therefore, the bodiless powers were amazed and filled with awe at seeing Your great love for Mankind. Together with them, we who live on earth are glorifying Your condescension to us and Your ascension away from us. Now we implore You, saying: Through Your ascension You have filled Your apostles and Your mother with a joy that surpasses every other joy, and through their intercession make us worthy of the joy of Your elect, for You are rich in mercy.” –Stichera for Vespers of the Ascension.

For most of us, this has been a special Pascha, as we feel the joy of celebrating with parishioners, friends, and family after being isolated for so long. We felt locked in our little tombs, awaiting the day when our “stones” were “rolled away.” Now we are able to see family and friends without a window or a computer screen between us, able to hug one another without fear. We may still hear daily reports of the number of “positives” and deaths, but we find comfort as we exclaim “By death He trampled Death, and gave life to those in the tombs.” We are freed from the four walls that had surrounded us 24/7,

can enjoy the Spring weather and the Joy that only Christ can give us.

For some, the Ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ is very difficult to understand or accept. We believe that Christ physically died and rose in the flesh to



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

conquer sin and death for our salvation. We are caught up in crying out “Christ is risen” for forty days after Easter; most homilies for this time are centered on, or at least refer in some way to, the Resurrection. But, come the Feast of the Ascension, we start to lose that sense of “foregone conclusion.” Many years ago, I was in a conversation with a non-Catholic professor who taught seminarians at the theological seminary attached to the college I attended, and at one point he stated, “I can’t believe that the last thing the disciples saw of Jesus was the bottoms of His feet.” I was so taken aback that someone who was teaching future ministers did not believe in the physical ascension of our Lord that I had no answer for him. I believe that if we deny that Christ

physically “ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father,” (cf. the Profession of Faith), we deny His Incarnation as surely as if we denied His physically taking flesh from the Virgin at His birth, or truly and physically rising from the dead on the

“But in fact, Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep. For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ.” (1 Co 15:12-23) If we do not believe in His Ascension, we call the Apostles liars and charlatans. As St. Paul says: “Therefore it is said, ‘When He ascended on high He led a host of captives, and He gave gifts to men.’ (In saying, ‘He ascended,’ what does it mean but that He had also descended into the lower parts of the earth? He who descended is He who also ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things.)” (Eph 4:8-10).

Yes, our finite minds cannot picture heaven, the throne, His physically being lifted from the sight of the disciples, and taking His seat in heaven, yet we know by faith that it is true. The “how” is beyond our understanding, but we believe it to be true, just as we believe that He was born, taught us, suffered for us, and rose from the dead for us. We see it in His encounter with the two disciples at Emmaus. We see it in His appearance to Mary Magdalene at the Tomb. We see it in His appearance to the Ten and, eight days later, in telling Thomas to touch the nail prints in His hands and to place his hand into His side. “And he [John] who has seen has testified, and his testimony is true; and he knows that he is telling the truth, so that you may believe.” (John 19:35)

So, even as we believe all this by faith during this Paschal Season, so too we believe that all that He has promised is true. This includes His promise that He is with us always, even as we go through this time of trial.

Yes, all this has been testified to, so that we may believe. “Remembering, therefore, this saving command and all that has come to pass in our behalf: the cross, the tomb, the resurrection on the third day, the ascension into heaven, the sitting at the right hand, and the second coming in glory...” (Anaphora, Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom), we embrace and hold fast to the fact of His physical ascension into heaven, and to His physical return on the Last Day. Let us rejoice and be glad in it! **ECL**

### 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 Saint John’s

parishioners. 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, Saint 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.

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 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



**Eastern Catholic Life**

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**UPCOMING EPARCHIAL AND PARISH EVENTS**

**MAY, 2022**

- 2 Sunday of the Holy Myrrh-bearers
- 9 Sunday of the Paralytic  
*Happy Mother's Day!*
- 16 Sunday of the Samaritan Woman
- 22 Sunday of the Man Born Blind
- 26 Holy Ascension of Our Lord  
*Holy Day of Obligation*
- 29 Sunday of the Fathers of the First Six Ecumenical Councils  
*Seventh Paschal Sunday*
- 30 Memorial Day  
*Chancery closed\* Civic Holiday*

**JUNE, 2022**

- 5 Pentecost  
*The Descent of the Holy Spirit*

- 6 Pentecost Monday  
*Simple Holy Day*
- 13 Sunday of All Saints

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 • 732-280-2682  
 Dr. Maureen Daddona, Ph.D.  
 Victim's Assistance Coordinator • 516-623-6456