



EASTERN CATHOLIC LIFE

Official Publication of the Byzantine Catholic Eparchy of Passaic

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JUNE 2024



I LIFT UP MY EYES

Pastoral Reflections of Bishop Kurt



NEW METROPOLITAN ARCHBISHOP ORDAINED FOR THE ARCHEPARCHY OF PREŠOV, SLOVAKIA

ing Archbishop Péter Fülöp Kocsis as the first Metropolitan Archbishop there. By the way, our first Metropolitan Archbishop was Steven Kocisko, who was the first Bishop of Passaic before that. When I was a seminarian in 1987, I drove around eastern Europe with Archbishop Fülöp who was also a seminarian at the time, visiting parishes and sleeping in farmhouses. It was summertime and all the food was fresh from someone's garden or farm.

with the assistance of a translator, smiling and spreading good will throughout the hall. He seemed genuinely thrilled with each person he met.

In 2022, Archbishop Babjak took early retirement, and we waited almost two years for a new Archbishop in this important see. Last year, Pope Francis named a Slovak monk as the new Metropolitan Archbishop, and this past January, Archbishop William and I flew

deacon. That custom developed in the "old country" because almost all parish priests are married, and so a young man was usually ordained a deacon and priest soon after his marriage so that he could support his family. The three sacraments were often a week apart. Since marriages in the old country fall apart nowadays just like here, they don't do that anymore. They usually wait about two years after marriage for ordination now. In any case, young Father

We have exciting news in our Church—after four years with no bishop in our Mother Eparchy, of Mukachevo-Uzhhorod, the Holy Father has blessed us with Vladyko Teodor, baptized Andrij Matsapula, who will be consecrated on July 16, 2024. Our Ruthenian Byzantine Catholic Church, called Greek Catholic in Europe, came into being on a spring day, April 24, 1646. That is one reason we think of the Feast of Saint George as our birthday, though old dates can be a little confusing, and the original document was lost for almost four hundred years, so no wonder our early history was murky. As a matter of fact, I am not a historian, so a lot of what I write in this column might be up for discussion. In the spring of 1646, 63 Orthodox priests gathered in Uzhhorod Castle and signed a document bringing themselves into full communion with the Pope of Rome, by recognizing the Archbishop of Eger as their lawful bishop. That was about one tenth of the priests in the region, so the Union of Uzhhorod was actually rather gradual.

Although we received our first Greek Catholic bishop in 1652, our Mother Eparchy of Mukachevo was not established until 1771, during the reign of Empress Maria Teresa, who is, in many ways, the mother of our Church. I always thought that our second eparchy was Prešov, but I learned writing this article that our eparchy in Croatia predates it. The Eparchy of Križevci was created in 1777, also through the patronage of Empress Maria Teresa.

The first Metropolitan See in our Church was our own Archeparchy of Pittsburgh, elevated in 1968. Since then, the Holy Father made Prešov, Slovakia, a Metropolitan See in 2008, naming Archbishop Ján Babjak, S.J., as the first Metropolitan Archbishop, and then making Hajdúdorog, Hungary, a Metropolitan See in 2015, nam-



Archbishop Jonáš Maxim at the altar in the Cathedral of Saint John the Baptist in Prešov



At Gerstner Cafe in Vienna, you can feel like you are a member of the Hapsburg imperial household, for less money than it costs to eat in New Jersey



The great East Slovak Steel Works in Košice, Slovakia

Although Prešov was not our second eparchy in chronology, it always seemed to be our second most important eparchy after Mukachevo. Many of you may remember the ebullient Archbishop Babjak from some of our own events and banquets. I was astonished when I saw him at a banquet for 500 people in Pittsburgh. Although his English language skills are marginal, he went through the room, exchanging a few words with every single person

to Slovakia to participate in his consecration and enthronement.

The new archbishop, Archbishop Jonáš (Jozef) Maxim, M.S.U., was born in 1974 on the Feast of the Entrance of the Mother of God into the Temple, November 21. He was born in Levoča, Slovakia, in the Eparchy of Prešov and ordained a priest for Prešov on July 11, 1998. He was ordained a priest less than a month after he was ordained a



Father Jonáš Maxim makes his profession of the true Holy Catholic Apostolic Faith in front of the Papal Nuncio, Archbishop Nicola Girasoli. The Nuncio is the ambassador and representative for the Holy Father. By the way, girasoli means unflowers in Italian.

Jozef entered the Studite Monastery in Ukraine after six years as a priest and was professed two years later, taking the monastic name Jonáš, and as a bishop he will use his monastic name.

When I flew to Slovakia, I left Newark on Janu- ...continued on page 2



Archbishop Skurla signs the witness book after hearing Father Jonáš profess the Faith.



Two bishops lead Father Jonáš around the altar of the Cathedral three times as he kisses it on each of the four corners before his consecration. The choir sings the tropar for martyrs, and Rejoice O Isaiah, just as at a presbyteral ordination and at a wedding. The bishop on the left is Bishop Nil.



Archbishop Jonáš Maxim standing at his cathedra. The cathedra is the chair that represents the teaching authority of the bishop, and we get the word cathedral from cathedra.

ary 24, and arrived the next day in Vienna for a long layover. Father Marek Novicky arrived at the same time from Toronto, and we took advantage of the layover to go into Vienna. We had breakfast at a very old restaurant called Gerstner. The interior looks like an Austrian palace. The food is very good. I was impressed that they served a perfect breakfast on heated porcelain china so your food doesn't get cold. The waiters are dressed up, and you can imagine that you are part of the Hapsburg imperial family when you eat there. As a matter of fact, it was less expensive than New Jersey, though the plane ticket would make it more expensive if you only fly to Vienna to have breakfast.

the gauge. The trains in Russia and the Soviet Union were known for having a wider track than the rest of Europe, 1,520 mm or 1.52 meters wide or just under five feet (by 5/32"). The standard gauge in the United States is 1,435 mm or 4 feet 8 1/2 inch. The Uzhhorod to Košice line was built to the broad-gauge standard of the Soviet Union at the time, even though most of the line is in Slovakia. Before building this line in 1965 and 1966, the iron ore from the Soviet Union was bottlenecked at the border because of the different gauge. The line was electrified in 1978, and still operates today. In 1996, I got to ride on the broad-gauge Russian rails on an overnight train from Moscow to St. Petersburg. You might be interested to know that the Hogwarts Express in

pal nuncio, the personal representative and ambassador of Pope Francis, received the profession of the faith from Father Jonáš, and most of the bishops present signed the document witnessing that the candidate had professed the true Catholic Apostolic Faith. Since the creed was in Church Slavonic, I felt justified in signing the document of witness.

Vasil, S.J., and he wore the most spectacular crown I have ever seen. He was one of my teachers in Rome and one of my examiners for the License degree. The two principal co-consecrators were Bishop Peter Rusnák, who is our Bishop of Bratislava, Slovakia, and was the Apostolic Administrator of Prešov until this year, and also Bishop Venedykt (Valery) Aleksiychuk, M.S.U., who is now the Ukrainian Bishop of Chicago and was a fellow monk with the new Archbishop. Please say a prayer for Archbishop Cyril Vasil—you may have seen in the news that Pope Francis sent him to India to mediate an ugly fight there.

The next morning, we lined up and processed into the great Cathedral of Saint John the Baptist, the cathedral church of our martyred bishops, Pavel Peter Gojdič and Basil Hopko, to consecrate and install their successor, the second Metropolitan Archbishop of Prešov and the ninth bishop. The principal consecrator was Archbishop Cyril

After the great Divine Liturgy, it seems like it was one meal after another, as



Archbishop Ján Babjak S.J. and Father Marek Novicky at Litmanova.



Archbishop Babjak prepared dinner for us in his new residence, a cabin at Litmanova.



I met up with Deacon Ryan and Nicole Liebhaber and some of their children at MacDonalds.

We flew on a regional jet to Košice, the second largest city in Slovakia, and the main airport for east Slovakia. Approaching the city, we flew past an enormous steel works. One of the reasons that Hitler invaded then-Czechoslovakia was for the great steel works of Slovakia. The steelworks went by the intimidating moniker of Východoslovenské železiarne (VSŽ) Košice, until it was purchased by U.S. Steel in 2000 becoming U.S. Steel Košice. Then, in January of this year, it was purchased by Nippon Steel of Japan. So, when we were flying past it, I don't know if it was U.S. Steel or Nippon Steel, but it sure was big!

Orlando, Florida, is a whopping 1800 mm or 5 feet 10 7/8 inches!

From the airport in Košice, we went to our hotel in Prešov. We stayed at the Hotel Dukla which is left from the Soviet era, built in 1952. It was probably quite modern looking in 1952, and has not aged badly aesthetically, to be honest.

Speaking of big, train aficionados might have heard of the special train line that connects Uzhhorod to Košice. Countries around the world have different widths for their railroad tracks, called

The next day, we were in the chapel at the chancery of the Archeparchy of Prešov for Vespers and the all-important profession of faith of the new candidate for the episcopacy. One of the few descriptions that we have from the earliest Church, of the creation of a new bishop, tells us that: the bishops from the surrounding region gathered in the city, and having received his profession of faith, they laid hands on him. The pa-



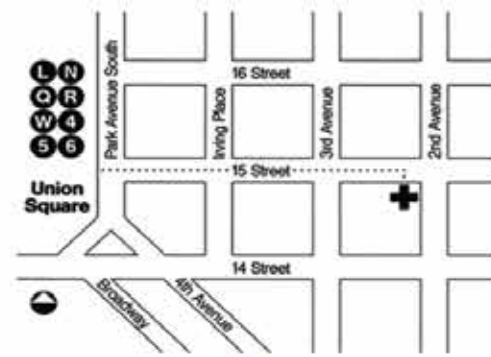
H. Lautman — The Shop on Main Street or Obchod na korze. The movie "The Shop on Main Street" was a 1965 movie about the arianization of Czechoslovakia during the Nazi occupation. In the movie, a gentile Slovak is given ownership of a shop, owned by an elderly Jewish woman. The movie won the Oscar for best foreign language film in 1965, the first Oscar for a Slovak language film.



1924 CENTENNIAL 2024

100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE BYZANTINE RUTHENIAN EXARCHATE IN THE UNITED STATES

Subway Station:
14th Street–Union Square



You are invited to
St. Mary's Byzantine Catholic
Church for an evening of
celebration

7:00 PM

Symposium on the arrival and ministry of
our first bishop.

Presented by Fr. Christopher Zugger,
historian.

7:45 PM

Moleben of Thanksgiving celebrated by
the Most Reverend Kurt R. Burnette,
Eparch of the Byzantine Catholic Eparchy
of Passaic, along with local clergy.

8:30 PM

Reception

Bishop Takach
arrived in New York
City on August 13,
1924, and celebrated
a Moleben of
Thanksgiving at
the original St. Mary's
Church.



246 East 15th Street, New York, NY

AUG | 13TH | 2024

REGISTRATION



For more information:



212-677-0516



fredcimbala@gmail.com



they do in eastern Europe. With jet lag, sometimes it's a bit of blur. I was able to get away to have a snack at McDonald's near the chancery with the Deacon Ryan Liebhaber and family. Deacon Ryan has been studying at the International Theological Institute near Vienna with the goal of ordination to the priesthood. God-willing, he will be ordained to the priesthood on August 29 of this year. It was great to see Deacon Ryan and his wife, Pan'i Nicole, and most of their children.

One of the more interesting and sobering sights was H. Lautmans, a store that appeared in a movie in 1965 about the arianization of Slovakia, that is, the confiscation of all Jewish property, and replacement of the owners with non-

Jewish owners. This campaign was the prelude to the deportation and murder of the Jews, just as in other countries under Nazi occupation. The movie won the 1965 Oscar or Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film. It was the first Oscar for a film in Slovak. A most shameful part of this history, for us, is that the President of Slovakia at this time was a Latin-rite Catholic priest, Jozef Tiso. He not only turned his country over to Hitler but participated in the deportation of the Jews. The Vatican actually intervened towards the end and the Slovak government halted the deportation, but then the Germans sent in their own forces to finish off those that were left. In all, about two thirds of the Jews in Slovakia were murdered. During this horror, Domenico

Tardini, the Vatican undersecretary of State, complained, "Everyone understands that the Holy See cannot stop Hitler, but who can understand that it does not know how to rein in a priest?" In fact, the men who pushed the Vatican to intervene and stop the deportation and slaughter in Slovakia were Giuseppe Burzio, the Papal Nuncio in Slovakia, and Angelo Roncalli, the Papal Nuncio to Turkey and future Pope Saint John XXIII.

The day after the consecration, Archbishop William left for Uzhhorod. It was his first trip to Ukraine since the war started, and he was able to tour the region of Transcarpathia and meet some of the many refugees taken care of by our Church there. He met with some

of the widows and other bereaved, and with some of the victims of war crimes. I drove up to Litmanova to visit with Archbishop Babjak who now lives in a very small cabin at the shrine. He loves company and fixed dinner for Father Marek and me. Father Marek was the secretary to Archbishop Babjak before moving to Toronto where he is the chancellor of our Exarchate there. The next day, my flight out of Košice was at 5:20 in the morning, and after changing planes in Vienna, I was back in New Jersey by 2:00 in the afternoon. It was a real whirlwind trip, but worth it! As the Italians say, vale la pena! C'Bohom.

+Kurt Burnette



PEOPLE YOU KNOW

IN PASSAIC...

Cathedral Food Pantry Endures

It began with Father Marcel Szabo kind response to a needy mother of seven sons asking only for cereal. From there, it grew into an annual food drive held every August at Saint Michael's Cathedral in Passaic. In 2016, that month-long drive became the first Cathedral's first permanent charitable ministry. The Cathedral basement had the perfect location: an unused room right next to an entry door. Parishioners were asked to add an item or two to their own shopping carts and bring them as part of their Sunday offering. Word spread and guests were accommodated whenever they appeared, either by Cathedral Rector, Father Jack Custer or Office Manager Bob Keenan.

In the beginning, ten requests a week were average. Although there was never any formal publicity, the number of visitors continued to grow. For the past five years, Saint Michael's Food Pantry has operated exclusively on Tuesday mornings. Guests begin lining up as early as 6am in anticipation of the 9:30 opening time. Some regularly participate in the daily 8am Divine Liturgy or Lenten Matins. The Pantry closed for a few months in response to COVID but reopened as soon as regulations permitted. The Pantry now serves 50 to 60 households a week.

Saint Michael's Food Pantry is supplied, stocked, and served entirely by Cathedral parishioners and friends. Parishioners bring non-perishable items to Sunday worship by the can or the caseload. On Mondays, Paul and Helena DeKeukelaere arrange the foods on shelves donated by Mark Hrehovčik. The guests are served by pairs of volunteers including Gabrielle Baxter, Patricia Burke, Joan Chromey, Cheryl Duch, Diane Grip, Elaine Loya, Chiara Polvani, Diane Popowicz, and Patrice Amatrudi, who handles scheduling. High school Spanish is recalled and pleasant interactions ensue. Occasionally cultures collide in amusing ways, as when a Jamaican housewife tries to understand, if not quite appreciate, the idea of sauerkraut.

The Food Pantry ministry has attracted the support of some good neighbors. The Knights of Columbus Women's Auxiliary at Saint Philip Roman Catholic Church in Clifton collects and delivers food on a monthly basis. Two of its members, Jackie Wozniak and Jane Beck, also volunteer to distribute. The children of Saint



Nicholas Ukrainian Greek Catholic school in Passaic hold several food drives annually for the benefit of the Pantry, with the support of Father Andriy Dudkevych and Sister Kathleen Hutsko, SSMI. Thanks to the Scannell family the Pantry also benefits from the annual "Souper Bowl" at Corpus Christi Roman Catholic School in Hasbrouck Heights. Friends from around the country who follow the Cathedral's live streamed liturgical services also contribute generously via various delivery apps.

The guests are an ever-changing group as new immigrants arrive, and others gain financial stability. Because they are invited to make their own selections in each of the dozen categories of groceries offered, the guests often refer to their visit as "las compras" (Spanish for shopping).

From its earliest days, the original Church in Jerusalem fed the needy. The Food Pantry ministry in Passaic has been an occasion of grace both for those who give and for those who receive, and has brought the Cathedral neighborhood closer together.

IN POCONO SUMMIT...

Parish Celebrates Feast to Complete the Paschal Season

Parishioners of Saint Nicholas of Myra Byzantine Catholic Church in Pocono Summit, PA, closed out the Paschal Feast by enjoying the annual Paschal Fellowship Meal on the 6th Paschal Sunday – the Sunday of the Man Born Blind. Guests from Georgia and Texas who attended the Divine Liturgy were invited and joined the parishioners in this joyous celebration. The menu included traditional paschal basket items including ham, kielbasi, paska, hrutka, red beets, and horseradish, homemade nut and poppy kolach for dessert. Saint Nicholas Church is located on Route 940 & Commerce Street, five minutes from the Kalahari Resort and Conference Center in the Poconos. Divine Liturgies are 4 PM Saturday and 10 AM Sunday. Father Michael J Salnický is the pastor of Saint Nicholas Church and invites you to join us when visiting in the Poconos!



Doctor Sonny Perdue, Chancellor of the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia, officially invests Doctor John Fuchko III as President of Dalton State College

IN ROSWELL...

Parishioner Invested as President of Dalton State College

Doctor John Fuchko III, a parishioner of Epiphany of Our Lord Church in Roswell, Georgia, was invested as president of Dalton State College on April 26, 2024. Doctor Fuchko's wife, Sherie, recently graduated from Saints Cyril & Methodius Byzantine Catholic Seminary with a Masters of Arts in Theology. Together they have 12 children. Father Lewis Rabayda, Parochial Administrator, was asked to give the Invocation Prayer at the Investiture.



Father Lewis Rabayda offers a prayer of invocation for Doctor Fuchko.

AROUND THE EPARCHY



IN TRENTON...

Bring a Parishioner to the Church Office Days

On April 22 and 23, 2024, parishioners from Assumption of the Virgin Mary Parish received a glimpse of how the church office works and the tasks that are completed during a regular, business day. At the inaugural "Bring a Parishioner to the Church Office Days" parishioners learned about financial issues, clerical duties, and bulletin preparation. There was a presentation about the cemetery and church records and how the office interacts with various businesses, parishioners, the public, as well as the eparchy throughout the year. There were many questions and engagement during the two morning sessions. Parishioners also raised thoughtful suggestions during the presentation that staff hope to incorporate into their daily functions. Certificates of Appreciation were presented to everyone who attended. Initial feedback was highly positive and there are plans to make this an annual event. The church office staff at Assumption Parish was pleased to bring this event to its parishioners.



IN SOUTH ORANGE...

Byzantine Divine Liturgy Offered for Students

Over one hundred students at Seton Hall University in South Orange, NJ, had their first experience of the Byzantine Catholic Church on Sunday April 28, when the Divine Liturgy replaced the regularly scheduled 8 PM Mass at the University's historic Immaculate Conception Chapel. Fathers Jack Custer, Syncellus for New Jersey, and Thomas Shubeck, a member of the University faculty, concelebrated the Liturgy. Responses were led by Saint Michael's Cathedral Head Cantor, John Klapko, and Assistant Cantor, Anna Marie Ukueberuwa. Rich Smith and SHU student, Bryan Perez, of the cathedral parish served the Liturgy. The Epistle was read by John Shubeck, also a student at SHU. This outreach was made possible by Father Nicholas Sertich, Director of Campus Ministry.

+JOHN HOSPODAR, 99, FATHER OF MONSIGNOR ROBERT HOSPODAR, FALLS ASLEEP IN THE LORD


+John Hospodar, 99, father of Monsignor Robert Hospodar, fell asleep in the Lord at Brightview Senior Living Center, Wayne, PA, where he had been residing. He was born in Drifton, PA, son of the late John, Sr., and Helen (Popovec) Hospodar. A veteran of the U.S. Army, he served during World War II with the 90th Signal Corps, attaining the rank of technical sergeant and serving during the Korean War, attaining the rank of second lieutenant.

Prior to retiring, he was vice president, controller of Campbell Soup International Operations. He was a graduate of Hazleton Senior High School, where he was team captain of the basketball team (1942). He was a graduate of Susquehanna University (1949) and received an honorary MBA from Drexel University, LeBow College of Business, in May 2009.

He was preceded in death by his wife, Rita Theresa (Hollick) Hospodar, on Nov. 15, 2021, and a brother, Joseph.


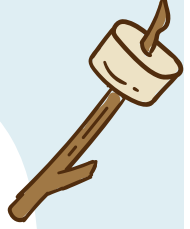
He is survived by his children, Monsignor Robert Hospodar, New York City; Thomas Hospodar and his wife, Janice Sly, Mississauga, Ontario, Canada; Edward David Hospodar, Sr., and his wife, Dana Sims Hospodar, Wayne, PA; and Sharon Ann Major and her husband, Shawn Major, Plaster Rock, New Brunswick, Canada; a sister, Helen Fellin, Tempe, Ariz.; three grandchildren, Ashton Hospodar Buzbee and her husband, Alex Buzbee; Edward David Hospodar, Jr., and his wife, Bianca Hospodar; Sarah Hospodar Curtis and her husband, William Curtis; six great-grandchildren: Gloria, Hollis, and Gwyneth Buzbee; Edward David Hospodar, III; Charlotte Hospodar; Charles Curtis; and several nieces and nephews.

Rite of Christian Burial with the Divine Liturgy were celebrated at 10 AM Thursday, May 2, 2024, in Saints Peter & Paul Byzantine Catholic Church, Beaver Meadows, PA. *May his memory be eternal!*




Byzantine Catholic Eparchy of Passaic



2024 SUMMER CAMPS AT CARPATHIAN VILLAGE POCONO MOUNTAINS, PA

Camp Theotokos July 14-18, 2024


Camp Theotokos is an all girls camp open to girls ages 6-17. The camp will feature fun activities and games, spiritual talks to lead girls closer to God, and a trip to an indoor waterpark! The registration fee for this camp is \$175. Deadline to register is Saturday, June 29, 2024.




Altar Server Congress July 21-25, 2024



Altar Server Congress is an all boys camp for current altar servers ages 6-17. The camp will feature spiritual talks aimed at serving God on the altar, lots of fun and games, serving liturgy with Bishop Kurt, and a trip to an indoor waterpark! Deadline to register is Saturday July 6, 2024.



Camp St. Nicholas August 11-15, 2024

Camp St. Nicholas is a preteen coed boys and girls camp for ages 6-12. There will be a trip to an indoor waterpark, spiritual talks aimed at growing closer to God, and plenty of fun and games! The registration fee for this camp is \$175. Deadline to register is Saturday July 27, 2024.



Scan the QR codes to register or visit www.eparchyofpassaic.com/youthsummercamps and join us for a summer of fun!

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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)

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

Eparchial Website: **www.EparchyofPassaic.com**



1924—Centennial—2024

Establishment of the
Byzantine Ruthenian Church Exarchate
in the United States



Most Reverend Basil Takach, D.D.

First Byzantine-Ruthenian Bishop in the United States

Ruthenian Exarchate Established May 8, 1924

Pope Pius XI appointed Father Basil Takach as Bishop for United States May 20, 1924

Bishop Basil Takach Episcopal Ordination, Pentecost Sunday, June 15, 1924,

Saint Athanasius Church, Rome, Italy

Bishop Takach arrived at New York Harbor August 13, 1924, on the liner RMS Mauretania
and offered a Moleben of Thanksgiving at Saint Mary of the Protection Church, New York City

The Dual Anniversaries

1924 — Centennial — 2024

Establishment of the
Byzantine Ruthenian Church Exarchate
in The United States



1974 — Golden Anniversary — 2024

Dedication of the Byzantine Ruthenian Chapel,
Washington, DC

Dedication of the Byzantine Ruthenian Church
in The United States

To The Protection of the Mother of God



Schedule of Events

Saturday, October 12, 2024 — Basilica of the National Shrine		3:30 PM	Conclusion of Pilgrimage events at the Basilica
9:00 AM	Welcome of Pilgrims in the Great Upper Church Msgr. Vito Buonanno, Director of Pilgrimages		—Epiphany of Our Lord Byzantine Catholic Church, Annandale, Va
10:30 AM	Hierarchical Divine Liturgy Archbishop Skurla, Bishop Burnette, Bishop Pipta	6:00 PM	Festive Banquet at Epiphany of Our Lord Parish Center
12:00 Noon	Lunch in the Cafeteria Pilgrims may visit the Basilica Gift Shop and Book Store.	Sunday, October 13, 2024 — Epiphany of our Lord, Annandale, VA,	
1:15 PM	Moleben to the Theotokos at the Byzantine Ruthenian Chapel Archbishop and Bishops presiding	10:00 AM	Divine Liturgy at Epiphany of our Lord Church Archbishop and Bishops
3:00 PM	Panachida for departed Bishops, Priests, Deacons, Monastics and Religious, and Christ's Faithful	11:30 AM	Brunch at Epiphany Parish Center

Byzantine Ruthenian Metropolitan Church in the United States

Centennial Photomontage



Most Reverend Basil Takach, DD

First bishop for the Byzantine Ruthenian Faithful from Subcarpathia in the United States

Basil Takach was born into a priestly family on October 27, 1879, in Vuchkovo, a scenic village of the Marmarosh District. His father, Reverend Basil Takach, was a priest, and his mother, Helena Dolinay, was a daughter of a priest. Orphaned as a boy, he was raised and received education under the supervision of his maternal uncle, Canon Nicholas Dolinay. He attended elementary school at Satu Mare (Romania) and attended college and seminary at Three Holy Hierarchs Seminary, Užhorod. Upon the completion of his seminary studies, he chose to serve the Lord as an unmarried priest. He was ordained to the holy priesthood by Bishop Julius Firczak on December 14, 1902.

After several years of pastoral work in the villages of Lazy and Malj Rakovets in the Ugocha County, Father Takach was transferred in 1911, to an administrative position in Užhorod and appointed comptroller of the Eparchial funds and Executive Director of the Printing Society, "Uno". In 1912, Father Takach was appointed the Director of the Eparchial Boarding School, "Alumneum," and Instructor of Religion at the Eparchial Teachers College for Girls. At the end of World War I, in 1918, he was appointed Spiritual Director of the Eparchial Seminary in Užhorod.



MOST REVEREND BASIL TAKACH, D.D.
First Bishop of Pittsburgh Byzantine Rite Diocese

Pope Pius XI established an exarchate in the United States for the various groups of Faithful originating from Subcarpathian Rus by a

papal bull dated May 8, 1924 and, in the same bull, chose Father Basil Takach to be the first bishop. Interestingly, according to Dr. Walter Warzeski's research, the news of his selection was already sent to the United States by cable on March 21, 1924, from Bishop Anton Papp.

Bishop Takach received Episcopal Ordination through the imposition of hands of Bishop Josaphat Kotsylovsky, OSBM (declared a Blessed Martyr by Pope John Paul II) at Saint Athanasius Church, Rome, Italy on Pentecost Sunday, June 15, 1924.

St. Athanasius Church is the Greek Church attached to the Greek College in Rome which had served for the formation of Eastern Catholic clergy.



Exterior of St. Athanasius Church, contemporary photograph



Interior of St. Athanasius Church, contemporary photograph

[I recall a photograph of the episcopal ordination of Bishop Takach at St. Athanasius. I believe the priest who baptized me, Msgr. Tomislav Firis, was the deacon. If anyone has access to that photograph, please consider sharing it with us.]

Bishop Takach arrived in New York Harbor on the RMS Mauretania August 13, 1924 where he was met by a welcome party.



Vintage photo of the RMS Mauretania at New York Harbor

Upon his arrival on August 13, 1924, Bishop Takach went to Saint Mary's Protection (Pokrov) Church in Manhattan and prayed a Moleben of Thanksgiving.



Old St. Mary Protection Church on 13th Street, New York City, NY

Bishop Takach first resided at Saint Mary of the Assumption Church, Trenton, NJ. While residing at St. Mary of the Assumption Church, Bishop Takach blessed the new convent at St. Mary's for the Sisters of St. Basil the Great.

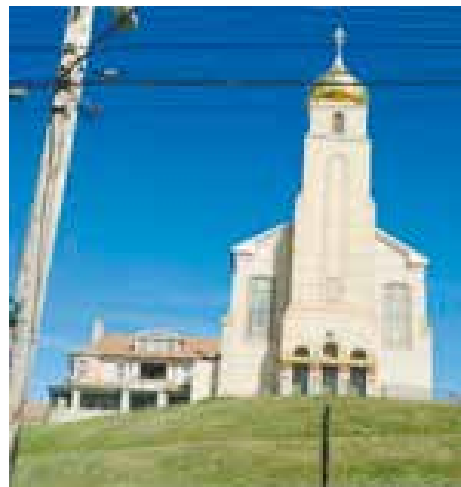


Vintage photograph of the Interior of St. Mary of the Assumption, Trenton, NJ, Historic photograph with old iconostasis



St. Mary of the Assumption, Trenton, NJ, Exterior

Bishop Takach next resided at St. John the Baptist Church, Uniontown, PA



Right: St. John the Baptist Church and Rectory

While in residence at St. John the Baptist Church, Uniontown, PA representatives from St. John the Baptist Church, Munhall, PA, a suburb of Pittsburgh, PA, promised land for a chancery and residence. The Greek Catholic Union, headquartered nearby, promised financial assistance.

With the permission of the Holy See, Bishop Takach made St. John the Baptist Church his cathedral.

In February 1926, Bishop Basil moved into his newly completed residence across the street from the cathedral. On July 5, 1926, the buildings were solemnly dedicated with long and impressive ceremonies attended by thousands.



Vintage photograph of St. John the Baptist Greek Catholic Cathedral, Munhall, PA interior



St. John the Baptist Greek Catholic Cathedral and Rectory, Munhall, PA

Architect: Titus de Bobula, 1903.

Titus de Bobula was a Budapest, Hungary, born architect who used Holy Cross Greek Catholic Cathedral, Užhorod, as the inspiration for his Art Nouveau interpreted church and residence.

Bishop Takach would not have to begin from scratch.



Left: Msgr. Gabriel Martyak, (1859-1934). Pastor of St. John the Baptist Church, Lansford, PA.

was appointed administrator on April 11, 1918 (1918-1924), for Greek Catholics in the United States who migrated from Pod Karpatska Rus by special faculties given to the Apostolic Delegate of the United States, Archbishop Giovanni Bonzano, by Pope Benedict XV.

At the same time, Msgr. Peter Poniatyshyn was appointed administrator for Greek Catholics Faithful of the Exarchate of Philadelphia who were from Galicia (Ukrainian Catholics).

The two administrators began the process of dividing the parishes in the United States based on their origins and population.

Msgr. Martyak's administration was a time of relative peace and stability. He granted permission for a Children's Prayerbook completely in English, and on October 28, 1921, approbation for The Book of Psalms of King David in Church Slavonic and English, published by the Greek Catholic Union.

Of great significance for the future Exarchate of Pittsburgh and the Metropolitan Church of Pittsburgh, *sui iuris* that would evolve from it was his initiative to invite the Sisters of St. Basil the Great to begin ministry among the various peoples from Subcarpathia in the US. Vatican officials gave permission for Msgr. Martyak to make this request and, in response, in January 1921, Mother Macrina Melnychuk, OSBM responded favorably to his request and founded Our Lady of Perpetual Help Province in Cleveland, OH. The first convent and novitiate there was a ten-room house. Five young women came in the spring of the same year and the community began to grow. The care of orphan children was the initial apostolic work of the small community.

When the Greek Catholic Union built an orphanage in Elmhurst, PA in 1923, they asked the Sisters to relocate the orphans from Cleveland to staff this new St. Nicholas Orphanage. Meanwhile, there were requests for the sisters to teach in parish schools which heralded the beginning of the Sisters' great work of education and religious education in the United States.



Mother Macrina Melnychuk, O.S.B.M. (1879-1948)



Vintage photograph of Holy Ghost Convent

Holy Ghost Byzantine Catholic Church, Cleveland, Ohio

First home of the Sisters of Saint Basil the Great, Our Lady of Perpetual Help Province

Please note that there may be more vintage photographs at the Library of the Eparchy of Passaic. Here are some references in an article from 1996:

Generally, the collection consists of pictures of priests, their families, parishioners, church buildings, church holidays and cultural activity. There is a famous photograph of thirteen pioneer Greek-Catholic priests in the United States of America, taken in 1890.⁽¹⁾ Among the earlier pictures, a couple come from the parish of St. Clair, PA. One was taken in 1911 and shows the priest and trustees of the parish. The other one was taken in 1917 during the First Communion of Children. There is also an early picture of St. Mary's Church in New Salem, PA, which shows the priest, trustees as well as some children. There are two interesting pictures of Bishop Soter Otrynskii (1866-1916), the first administrator of Greek Catholics in the United States of America, with some of his clergy. One was taken in 1913 and includes 14 priests, among others famous figures of: Rev. Joseph Hanulya (1874-1962), Rev. Valentine Gorzo (1869-1943) as well as Rev. (later) bishop Stephen-Alexander Dzubay (1857-1933). The other one shows Otrynskii with thirteen priests.⁽²⁾ Not dated is a tinted portrait of Msgr. Gabriel Martyak (1859-1934), the American administrator of Greek Catholics from Hungary. The picture of the retreat of Rusyn and Ukrainian Greek Catholic priests at Pocono Manor, PA was taken between 1916 and 1924. Along with both administrators: Msgr. Gabriel Martyak (1859-1934) and Rev. Peter Poniatyshyn (1877-1960), the Greek-Catholic Archbishop of L'viv Andrei Sheptytskii (1865-1944) is also pictured. Another picture of seventeen Greek Catholic seminarians, dated 1918 was taken at St. Mary's Seminary, Baltimore, MD, where Greek Catholic priests were once trained. From the year of his installation (1924), comes a portrait of the first Greek Rite Bishop of Pittsburgh, Basil Takach (1879-1948). The picture of this Bishop, together with 52 priests under his jurisdiction, was taken four years later at St. Vincent's College in Latrobe, PA. There is a 1931 picture of the retreat, which took place at Homestead, PA. It shows 35 priests under Bishop Basil Takach. One of the larger pictures in the collection shows about three hundred delegates of the 23rd Convention of Greek Catholic Union, which was held at Harrisburg, PA in 1940. There is a picture of the retreat of 64 cantors of the Eparchy of Pittsburgh, which took place in Uniontown, PA in 1947.

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Simon Peter answered him,
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- John 6:68-69

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He called to him the multitude with his disciples, and said to them, "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me." - Mark 8:34



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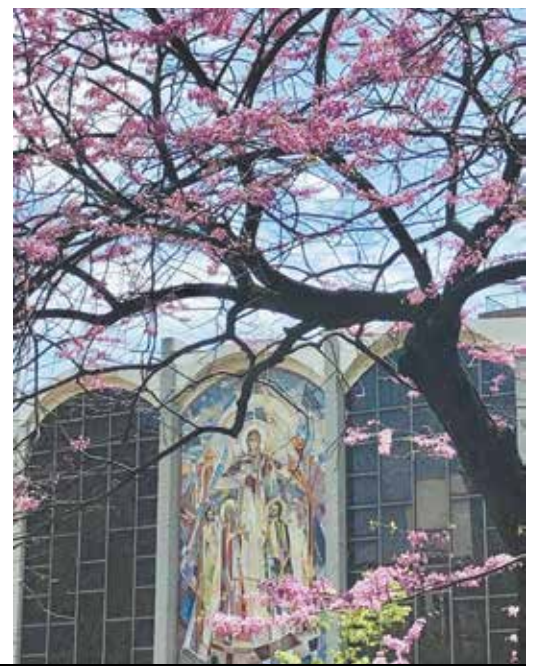
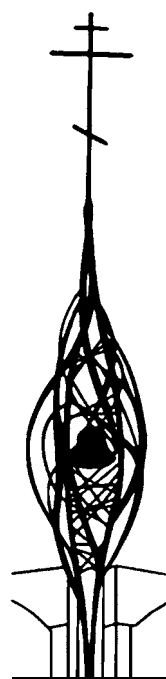
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Uzhhorod, 12th March 2024

Most Reverend
Kurt BURNETTE, Ph.D., J.D.
Bishop
Byzantine Catholic Eparchy of Passaic
445 Lackawanna Avenue
Woodland Park, New Jersey 07424

SLAVA ISUSU CHRISTU!

"O Christ, give rest to the souls of your servants, where there is no pain, sorrow or mourning, but life everlasting."

Your Grace!

With a great sorrow we received a communication about the death of the Reverend Father John Zeyack.

The deceased Father John was serving in our Eparchy from 1st March 2003 till 26th September 2006 and was very helpful for our young seminarians and also for the priests, which he gathered together to feel in communion each other. Even before and also after he was often guest in our eparchy. I had a chance to meet him personally many times during his stay here in Transcarpatia and also during my visits in the U.S.A. I appreciated his wholehearted desire and his deeds to always help our Eparchy of Mukachevo.

Please accept my sincere condolence and may his soul rest in peace.
Vichnaja pamjati!

United in prayers for the newly passed away our bellowed brother John,

Truly in the Lord,



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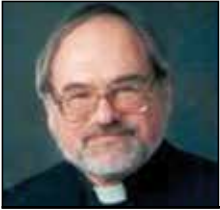
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THE BYZANTINE LITURGY

By Archpriest David Petras, SEOD

THE NATURE OF MARRIAGE

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (§ 1601) defines marriage: “The matrimonial covenant, by which a man and a woman establish between themselves a partnership of the whole of life is by its nature ordered toward the good of the spouses and the procreation and education of offspring; this covenant between baptized persons has been raised by Christ the Lord to the dignity of a sacrament.” We see, then, that it has two meanings, the first is that it is an expression of love between a man and a woman, as the *Catechism* then notes, “Their mutual love becomes an image of the absolute and unfailing love with which God loves man” (§ 1604). Marriage is also for the procreation of children, blessing the physical union by which a man and a woman are able to conceive children. In this way, they become partners with God in the creation of new life.

This nature of marriage is reflected by the prayers of the Church at the wedding. The love of the man for the woman comes from creation itself: “O Master, in the beginning you created man, and appointed him as the king of creation, and said, ‘It is not good for the man to be alone on earth. I will make a suitable partner for him’; and, taking one of his ribs, you fashioned woman.” Neither partner, then, is alone, and they give support to one another. The couple cannot do this by themselves, but only by the blessing, and in the grace and power of God. In the most ancient prayer of the rite of marriage, the priest says, “do stretch forth your hand from your holy dwelling place and join your servant (*Name*) and your servant (*Name*), for you alone join woman to man. Join them in oneness of mind, crown them in love, unite them in one flesh, give them fruit of the womb and the enjoyment of good children.” The Epistle that is read underlines the love

that the two must have for one another: “Defer to one another out of reverence for Christ As the church submits to Christ, so wives should submit to their husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church” (Ephesians 5:21.24-25). Though the language of submission may be used, it is clear that this is only because the couple must “defer to one another”, and that the husband must have the same love for his wife as Christ has for his people, the Church.

The greatest blessing is the gift of children, which comes forth from the love the man and woman have for each other. Throughout the wedding ceremony, the priest asks for this blessing, “grant to your servants (*Name*) and (*Name*) a peaceful life and length of days, chastity, love for one another in the bond of peace, a long-lived posterity, happiness in their children, and the unfading crown of glory. Make them

worthy to see their children’s children.” Sometimes we see an uneasiness in the Church fathers about the sexual intercourse of marriage, and that it is tolerated only for the sake of the procreation of children. However, this negativity is not found in the ritual. The prayer reads, “In your ineffable gift and great goodness you came to Cana in Galilee, and blessed the wedding there. Thus, you revealed that it is your will that there should be lawful marriage and from it the procreation of children.” The wedding in Cana, therefore, was Christ’s blessing of marriage, where he changed water into wine for the joy and celebration of the gift of marriage.

The mutual love of marriage is a supreme value, considered as a participation in the love of God for human beings. This love was present in holy marriages even when there were no children, such as in the unions of Abraham and Sarah, of Joachim and Anna, and of Elizabeth and Zachary. Their barrenness was taken away only by a miracle of God. In the blessing of the couple, they are inserted into this sacred history, and their marriages are likened to theirs, “Bless them, O Lord our God, as you blessed Abraham and Sarah Bless them, O Lord our God, as you blessed Joachim and Anna. Bless them, O Lord our God, as you blessed Zechariah and Elizabeth.” In the Vatican II Council, we are taught: “For as God of old made Himself present to His people through a covenant of love and fidelity, so now the Savior of men and the Spouse of the Church comes into the lives of married Christians through the sacrament of matrimony. He abides with them thereafter so that just as He loved the Church and handed Himself over on her behalf, the spouses may love each other with perpetual fidelity through mutual self-bestowal” (*Gaudium et Spes* 48).

The sacramental mystery of marriage is a part of human life, yet it is not our work, but a gift of God. As such, the couple must embrace it freely and commit themselves to one another. The Gospel proclaims that God has united the two people, therefore, “no human being must separate” them (Mark 10:9). Though sometimes marriages may fail because of a human failure to make the necessary commitment, the Church blesses the partners with God’s grace that a holy union may be achieved. The priest prays, “As you were there (in Cana), so also be here with your invisible presence; and bless this wedding, and grant to your servants a peaceful life and length of days, chastity, love for one another in the bond of peace, a long-lived posterity, happiness in their children, and the unfading crown of glory Keep their married life above reproach, and give them dew from heaven and the abundance of the earth.” **ECL**

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PRIESTLY REFLECTIONS

Father Paul Varchola West

"THE SPARROW AND THE SQUIRREL"

I have no idea how this was possible, but the other day I actually managed to find several minutes to sit and think. Seated on the humble back patio of our rectory, I found myself taking in the warm spring morning in an odd moment of peace and stillness. Staring at the grass, admittedly admiring the landscaping work I accomplished the previous Saturday, I was witness to a heart-warming and enlightening scene that contained far more wisdom than I could have imagined.

Fixed on the stark line in the grass between the light of the sun and the shadow of the tree in our neighbor's yard, a little sparrow caught my eye. As I watched him peck away at the grass with a very high level of intensity, my view expanded. I noticed a squirrel near the bird, foraging in the lawn I just put so much work into. At first, I laughed because I remembered being a child and my father always yelling and complaining about the squirrels digging holes in his lawn and I get it now! As I continued to watch the suburban wilderness unfold in front of me, I noticed small flying insects dancing intricately between light and shadow, suspended in the cool, gentle breeze. It was surprisingly picturesque.

As I sat in the stillness, I noticed something about the movement of my newfound little woodland friends. They were clearly hungry, working hard looking for food, but they were working diligently, happily, and with such peace. The sparrow, mere feet away from the squirrel, seemed unaffected by his furry, erratic presence. As they continued to forage under the shadow of the large tree, a robin landed near them and started hopping around. Neither the

squirrel nor the sparrow was phased. With the little bugs playing overhead, three more sparrows swooped down to join the first one and they all started pecking at the same little part of the ground. Clearly, there was something good down there! The first sparrow chirped sharply at the other three and they promptly flew away. The first sparrow shook his head in what I can only assume to be a moment of avian annoyance and flew away to join his friends. At that moment, for the first time, the squirrel stopped his work destroying my lawn to watch the sparrows fly away. He then began to roll around in the grass in a very playful manner as the robin hopped away. The squirrel eventually ran up the tree and I found myself alone, my new friends gone. I was left watching the little bugs, still dancing, unaware that anything had just happened.

In the moments after the little show had ended, I realized something. These little creatures, all so different from one another, were at such peace not only within themselves, but with each other. The sparrows didn't yell at the squirrel to get off their lawn; the squirrel didn't chase the sparrows away. In fact, each almost didn't care that the other was even there. The robin did not mock the sparrow for not having as nice a red breast as she. The squirrel didn't go on a Facebook rant about how fur is far superior to feathers, nor did the sparrows demand the squirrel remove his fur and put on a feather suit because the sparrows only associate with animals with feathers. And the bugs, well, they simply didn't care about anything.

Think of all the ways in which humans find it possible to make each other miserable on a moment-to-moment basis. It is almost as if we go looking for ways to make each other angry, exploiting the smallest, most inconsequential detail and turning it into a digital version of World War III, throwing hand grenades of 1's and 0's at our neighbor! Those little critters in the yard didn't care about their differences primarily because they were focused on their work, their duty, their purpose. They followed their path ordained by their Creator.

In the face of adversity, when we are challenged, when we fear, we simply need to follow the work given us by Jesus Christ. What is that work? We hear in Luke's Gospel that we are to "love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself." [10:27] As the Fathers say, if our heart, mind, and soul are truly in a state of loving God, then we will not be tempted to even the slightest passion, malice, or other ill-intended action because our senses will be directed toward God, not the evil lurking in the fallen world.

The problem nowadays is that even the most steadfast of Christians is wanting to make a stance on some digital platform, entirely divorced from anything that our nature intended. This would be akin to the sparrow trying to steal a chicken from an alligator's mouth, a fruitless endeavor. Pray, fast, live the liturgical life of the Church. Love the Lord God with all your heart and let no evil fill that space. Focus on the work given to us by the Lord. If we take these simple, easy to follow steps, we will certainly experience the same peace that my newfound animal friends so enjoyed. Let us remember the nature of the work we are given as Christians – to be a people of prayer – and act accordingly. **ECL**

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SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES

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

OUR DAILY BREAD

“Give us this day our daily bread.” It seems obvious. Behind the simple English word “daily,” however, lies a rather more complicated Greek word, *epiousion*, which occurs in the two Gospel versions of the Lord’s Prayer (Matthew 6:11 and Luke 11:3) and nowhere else in Greek literature. It can be broken down into *epi* (upon, over, in addition to) and *ousion*, but this second half, which probably derives from a word meaning “being/existence,” could conceivably derive from another word meaning “to go.”

The simplest understanding, the one enshrined in our English translation, would be: “give us today the bread we need to survive (today).” During the Exodus, the Lord provided manna for the Israelites every day. Anyone who tried to hoard today’s manna would discover that it rotted by the next morning. Only on the sixth day were the people told to gather a double portion, so that they would not have to work for food on the Sabbath. In this way, the people to trust that God would provide for their needs (Exodus 16). In the same sermon where He handed on the Lord’s Prayer Jesus Himself taught, “Do not worry about what you will eat.... do not worry about tomorrow” (Matthew 6: 25 and 34).

But what if the *-ousion* actually comes from the verb “to go” and means something like “next” (as a similar adjective does in Acts 7:27; 16:11; 20:15; 21:18; and 23:11)? In the 4th century, Saint Jerome claimed that this was how an older, long-lost “Gospel of the Hebrews” read. In that case, the prayer would be: “Give us tomorrow’s bread today.” This makes no sense literally and could only refer to the bread of the Kingdom that Jesus announced and which His parables often describe as a banquet: “Blessed is he who will eat bread in the Kingdom of God! (Luke 14:15; cf. Luke 22:30; cf. the “hidden manna” of Revelation 2:17). It is impossible to imagine any “bread of the Kingdom” except the Holy Eucharist. In fact, just about every ancient Christian liturgical text locates the Lord’s Prayer just before Holy Communion.

In his new Latin version of the Bible, Saint Jerome left two options open. Translating the Lord’s Prayer in Luke’s Gospel, Jerome used the word “daily.” For Saint Matthew’s Gospel, however, Jerome invented a new word, “super-substantial,” which perfectly reflected the compound Greek word but also clearly pointed to the mystery whereby the substance of bread is transformed to become something more: the Body of Christ. Nevertheless, it is “daily

bread” that became the standard text of the Prayer in the Latin Mass.

“Daily” was also preferred in the various modern-language translations of the protestant reformers. Suspecting this to be a denial of the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist, the important Roman Catholic “Douay-Rheims” English translation of 1611 insisted on “supersubstantial bread,” but this translation never found its way into Roman Catholic prayer. Some Roman Catholics still hear “daily bread” as a protestant error and prefer the Douay-Rheims translation.

Church Slavonic is of no help here. The oldest manuscripts show a variety of translations. *Nasušnyj*, which became standard in the 16th century, leaves open both senses of the Greek original: “for existence” or “supersubstantial.”

Jesus almost certainly pronounced the original Lord’s Prayer in Aramaic. Our four Gospels are already translations of Jesus’ original words! One way of recovering something of Jesus’ actual Aramaic words is to study the rare surviving documents of Aramaic-speaking Christian communities, like the Gospel of the Hebrews mentioned above. Another is to look to Syriac Christians whose language is closely akin to Ara-



maic. There we find the same ambivalence. The liturgical text of the Lord’s Prayer in Syriac asks for “enduring bread,” recalling Jesus’ warning: “Do not labor for the food which perishes but for the food which endures to everlasting life, which the Son of Man will give you” (John 6:27). In the Gospel texts themselves, however, the standard Syriac version prays for “daily bread.”

We can intend all three levels of meaning when we pray the Lord’s Prayer. We can ask for the basic necessities of life for today, trusting that the Lord will still be there for us tomorrow. We can recognize our need for the Bread of Life, our ongoing share in the sacrificial death and life-giving resurrection of Christ, and ask for it with gratitude and faith. And we can look forward to the coming of the Kingdom, whose foretaste is the Eucharistic Liturgy, and pray for a place at that table too. **ECL**

SEASONAL REFLECTIONS

Father Ronald Hatton



“GO THEREFORE AND MAKE DISCIPLES OF ALL THE NATIONS...”

One year I celebrated the Rites of Initiation for two little brothers. This was followed by a marriage, and then the Sunday celebration of the Feast of the Pentecost. As a result, the final words of Jesus to His disciples in the Gospel according to the Holy Apostle and Evangelist Matthew had a profound meaning to me. In these two Holy Mysteries we have concrete affirmation that this is the vocation to which we are called, each and every one of us.

This reading, Matthew 28: 16-20, is the Gospel reading appointed for the Baptismal service. It is not only to show us His command to “[baptize] them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit,” but also that, as a result of our initiation into the Body of Christ (baptism, sealing of the Holy Spirit, and receiving the Body and Blood of Christ), we have been given, by Jesus Christ, the mandate to do so! As Christians, as the Church, it is our vocation to “go therefore and make disciples....” In

our baptism, we are given the vocation to preach the Gospel.

In our marriage ceremony, we read a portion of the letter of the Holy Apostle Paul to the church at Ephesus, where he points out that marriage is “a great foreshadowing... it refers to Christ and the Church” (Eph. 5: 32). The joining of a man and woman in Holy Matrimony is a sign of the relationship between Christ and the Church. The Gospel reading, John 2: 1-11, is appointed for the marriage ceremony. Not only does the Church see this as Christ blessing Holy Matrimony, but it is also a sign of His power in our life. During what we call the Dance of Isaiah, we sing a troparion to the holy martyrs. Unless we understand that the primary meaning of the word “martyr” is not someone who has died for a cause—in our case, died for the Faith—but means witness. A martyr is a witness to the Faith. Because of this, we invoke the holy martyrs to bless the man and woman as they become witnesses to the world of the relationship between God and

Mankind. We also invoke the holy Apostles, “who proclaimed the consubstantial Trinity.” This makes no sense unless we see in marriage a witness of the Catholic Faith to the world. That is why marriage is one of the Holy Mysteries. Marriage is not a civil ceremony or a social formality, but it is consecrating the union to God, and giving marriage a new and higher purpose. In Holy Matrimony the couple is given the vocation to preach the Gospel!

With the coming of the Descent of the Holy Spirit, human beings are given the mandate to spread the Gospel, to live the Gospel, every day of our lives! Each of us has a new reason for living, a new reason for getting up in the morning, a new reason for interacting with family, friends, and co-workers. Each of us have been consecrated by God to be His ministers to the world. We are called to live the Gospel in our single life, in our married life. We are called to pass the Gospel on to our children and our children’s children.

Also, during the month of June, we celebrate the birth of the great prophet, forerunner, and Baptist of the Lord, John, and the pre-eminent apostles, Peter and Paul. Again, we are reminded of three great witness of Christ to the world, three great martyrs to the Faith. So, even though the great feasts—the Nativity, the Theophany, the Crucifixion, Resurrection and Ascension of our Lord, and the Descent of the Holy Spirit—are now behind us for a season, it is not a time to relax. In fact, it is a time for us to be witnesses to the world, to be martyrs. It is the time for the Church—you, me, and all of us baptized into Christ—to “go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you....” And as you do this, remember His final words to us: “and, lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” **ECL**



BIBLICAL PRINCIPLES OF MONEY & POSSESSIONS

By Father Michael J. Salnicko

THE ISSUE OF DEBT AND BORROWING

Previously, we were reminded that the first thing we must realize is that all money and possessions belong to and come from God. We are given them to see if we are wise stewards and it starts with generosity. It begins with giving our first and best to God. This generosity is in imitation of God and is an element of faith. It is a character quality God wants to instill in our hearts and it changes our whole life. We also learned the importance of establishing a detailed written monthly budget of every expense and income. Your detailed and comprehensive written monthly budget will show where you are spending your money. If your income does not cover your expenses, you will see where you are hiding your talents in the ground – i.e. spending foolishly - and CHANGE! Now we turn to Holy Scripture to see what it says about debt.

“Debt” is rebuked everywhere it is mentioned in Holy Scripture and the words ‘fool’ and ‘slave’ are used to describe

those who ‘choose’ debt. In fact, there is no such thing as ‘good debt’ in Holy Scripture. Here are a few of the passages:

- Proverbs 21:20 “The wise store up choice food and olive oil, but fools consume them without reason.” Did you know that at that time olive oil was viewed as a type of currency?
- Proverbs 22:7 “The rich rule over the poor and the borrower is slave to the lender.”
- 2 Kings 4:7 “Pay your debts.”
- Proverbs 22:26 “Do not become guarantors for debts.”
- Mt 25:29 “For to all those who have, more will be given, and they will have an abundance; but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away.”

- Romans 4:4 “Wages, like a debt owed, must be paid.”

To better understand debt and its implications, we must consider the action that precedes debt, which is borrowing. Let’s see what the Bible has to say:

- Exodus 22:14 “If anything is borrowed, it should be paid back. If what is borrowed is lost or injured, full restitution must be made.
- Deuteronomy 15:6 “For the Lord your God will bless you as He has promised, and you will lend to many nations but will borrow from none.”
- Ps 37:21 “The wicked borrows but does not pay back, but the righteous is generous and gives.”

In our materialistic culture, we have been taught that borrowing beyond our means is okay – even encouraged - everybody does it. We also blindly ignore the fact that lending is the way for someone or institution to make or increase a profit by pocketing your hard-earned income so they can grow rich. That’s NOT how God created it! According to the Bible, lending is not about increasing profit; it’s about being generous toward those in need (Exo 22:25, Lev 25:37, Mt 5:4), something we all are encouraged to do. This is the foundation of the Catholic Corporal Works of Mercy. This is the way for us we become the loving, forgiving, and generous person God desires us to be.

Glory to Jesus Christ! **ECL**

SCHOOL OF PRAYER

Father G. Scott Boghossian



THROUGH THE PRAYERS OF THE THEOTOKOS

Mary is the Theotokos, the one who gave birth to God. In the Nicene Creed, we profess our faith in “one Lord, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the only-begotten, born of the Father before all ages. Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, one in essence with the Father, through whom all things were made.”

Jesus Christ is the Almighty God, omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent. He is co-equal, co-eternal, and one in essence with the Father and the Holy Spirit. Glory to Jesus Christ!

This being the case, how glorious then must the Virgin Mary, the Mother of Christ our God, be? All of Our Lady’s titles, privileges, and prerogatives (perpetual virginity, immaculate conception, sinless life, bodily assumption, intercessory mediation, etc.) are rooted in her identity as the one who gave birth to God, the one who followed Him most closely and knew Him most deeply. Thus, “it is truly proper” to glorify her.

The Theotokos is prefigured in the characters, types, shadows, and symbols of the Old Testament, such as the Woman of Genesis 3:15, Eve, Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, Miriam, Jael, Hannah, Bathsheba, Esther, The “Virgin-Mother of Emmanuel” (Is. 7:14), Judith, the Mother of the Maccabees (2 Macc. 7), Jacob’s Ladder (Gen 28:12), the Burn-

ing Bush (Ex 3:1), the Temple (1 Kings 8), Jerusalem, Daughter Zion, the City of God, the Ark of the Covenant.

The Church’s devotion to Mary is rooted in the scriptural witness of the New Testament. Think of the Annunciation (Lk. 1:26-38), the Visitation (Lk. 1:39-56), the Nativity (Lk. 2:4-20), the Presentation in the Temple (Lk. 2:22-39), the Finding in the Temple (Lk. 2:41-52), the Wedding of Cana (Jn. 2:1-10), Mary at the foot of the cross (Jn. 19: 25-27), Mary at Pentecost (Ac. 1:13-2:4), and the apocalyptic Woman clothed with the sun (Rev. 12:1).

The Catholic Church is not the only Church that venerates and invokes the Mary, the Mother of God.

The ancient churches that trace their origins back to the Apostles (sometimes called the Apostolic Churches, i.e., Catholic, Orthodox, Coptic, Armenian, Ethiopian, Assyrian Church of the East, etc.) venerate and invoke the Blessed Virgin Mary. Even the Assyrian Church of the East, which rejected the Council of Ephesus (A.D. 431) and until this day erroneously rejects the title “Theotokos,” prays:

“Mary the holy virgin, beseech, make request, supplicate for the Church and her children that by your prayers they may be kept from all harm, to be made worthy of mercies and compassion on

that day of judgement” (Prayer Book, p. 95).

The hymn “Under Your Protection” or the “Sub Tuum Praesidium” may date back to the third century (or, at the latest, the fifth century) and is used in the Roman, Byzantine, Coptic, Armenian, and Ambrosian liturgies.

It’s impressive and reassuring to realize that all forms of Christianity that date back to the ancient apostolic Church love, praise, revere, and invoke the Mother of God. Historically speaking, no church or denomination that rejects or neglects our Lady can claim to be part of the historic Christian Church, the Church of the Scriptures, Apostles, Fathers, and Ecumenical Councils.

Saint Gregory Nazianzus (329 - 390) writes: “If anyone does not recognize the Holy Mary as the Mother of God, he is separated from the Divinity” (Ep. 101. 4).

Saint John Damascene (675 - 749) says: “Verily she is in the proper and true sense the Mother of God and The Lady; she rules over all Creation as she is both maid and the Mother of the Creator” (De fide orth. IV 14).

It was through Mary that Jesus Christ came to save us. It is through Mary, according to the Fathers and Saints, that God wants to give us every good thing.

For example, Saint Germanus of Constantinople (634 - 740), addressing Our Lady says, “Nobody can achieve salvation except through thee, O Most Holy One, nobody can receive a gift of grace except through thee... O Most Chaste One.”

Pope Leo XIII (1810 - 1903) articulates the same idea when he says that “from that great treasure of all graces, which the Lord has brought, nothing, according to the will of God, comes to us except through Mary, so that, as nobody can approach the Supreme Father except through the Son, similarly nobody can approach Christ except through the Mother.”

To be true Christians, we must be children of Mary. “Behold your Mother!” (Jn. 19:27). Renew your faith in the power of Mary. Honor her, be devoted to her, call on her, and rely on her all-powerful prayers. Most importantly, obey her imperial command to “do whatever He tells you” (Jn. 2:5).

Through the prayers of the Theotokos, O Savior, save us!

(Works Consulted: for the biblical basis of devotion to Mary, I consulted motherofallpeoples.com and, more specifically, <https://www.motherofallpeoples.com/post/meet-mary-the-blessed-virgin-the-bible-and-the-early-church>.) **ECL**

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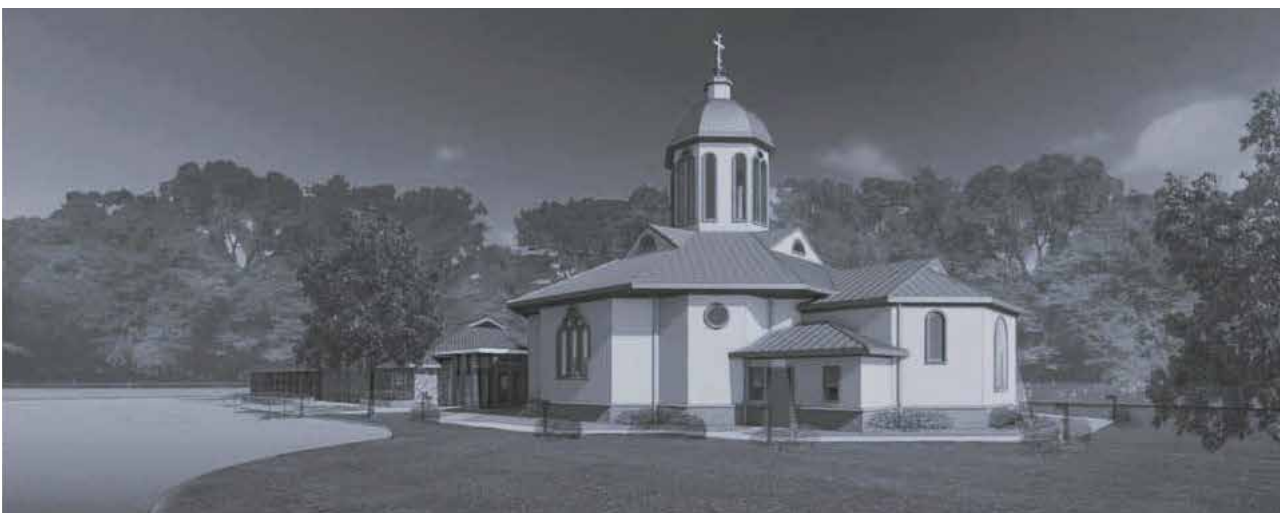
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JUNE, 2024

- 24 Nativity of John the Forerunner
Solemn Holyday
- 27-30 ByzanTEEN Youth Rally
San Diego, CA
- 29 Holy, Glorious, and Illustrious Apostles Peter and Paul
Holyday of Obligation

JULY, 2024

- 4 Independence Day
*Civic holiday * chancery closed*

AUGUST, 2024

- 1 Dormition Fast begins
- 4 Saint Nicholas Pilgrimage
Carpathian Village, Canadensis, PA
- 6 Holy Transfiguration of Our Lord
Solemn HolyDay

- 14 Sisters Servants' Annual Pilgrimage
Sloatsburg, NY
- 15 Holy Dormition of the Virgin Theotokos
Holyday of Obligation Chancery closed*

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Father David J. Baratelli, Ed.S., M.Div.
Safe Environment Program Coordinator • 732-280-2682

Dr. Maureen Daddona, Ph.D.
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