



EASTERN CATHOLIC LIFE

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Students hold signs supporting life
(photo credit: CNS photo/Jaclyn Lippelmann, Catholic Standard)

The theme for the 45th annual March for Life will be “Love Saves Lives: Life Is the Loving, Empowering and Self-Sacrificial Option.”

The March for Life Education and Defense Fund announced the theme for the 2018 rally and march at a briefing on Capitol Hill Oct. 3 with Jeanne Mancini, president of the March for Life organization and other pro-life leaders in Washington.

“We march for life because abortion is a horrific human rights travesty,” said Mancini.

She moderated a panel discussion on “how the pro-life movement continues to empower women” with Susan Gallucci, executive director of the Northwest Center, which offers a range of services to pregnant women and new mothers; Chuck

Donovan, president of Charlotte Lozier Institute, the research and education institute of the Susan B. Anthony List; and Alison Howard Centofante, director of alliance relations at Alliance Defending Freedom, a nonprofit legal group that supports pro-life, religious freedom and other issues.

The March for Life will take place Jan. 19, which is a Friday and comes ahead of the Jan. 22 anniversary of the U.S. Supreme Court’s 1973 ruling in Roe v. Wade and its companion case, Doe v. Bolton, that invalidated state and federal restrictions on abortions, legalizing abortion virtually on demand.

Pro-lifers from around the country will gather for a rally at noon on the grounds of the Washington Monument. After the rally, pro-lifers will march up Constitution Avenue to the court.

“LOVE SAVES LIVES” THEME FOR 2018 MARCH FOR LIFE MARKING ROE DECISION

By Catholic News Service, Washington

Centofante remarked that love saved her father’s life “through adoption and therefore love saved my life.”

“Planned Parenthood pushes the message that you should just eliminate the child to eliminate the problem,” she said.

“This world has too much violence, and this shows that we are loving at our core,” Centofante said about the 2018 theme.

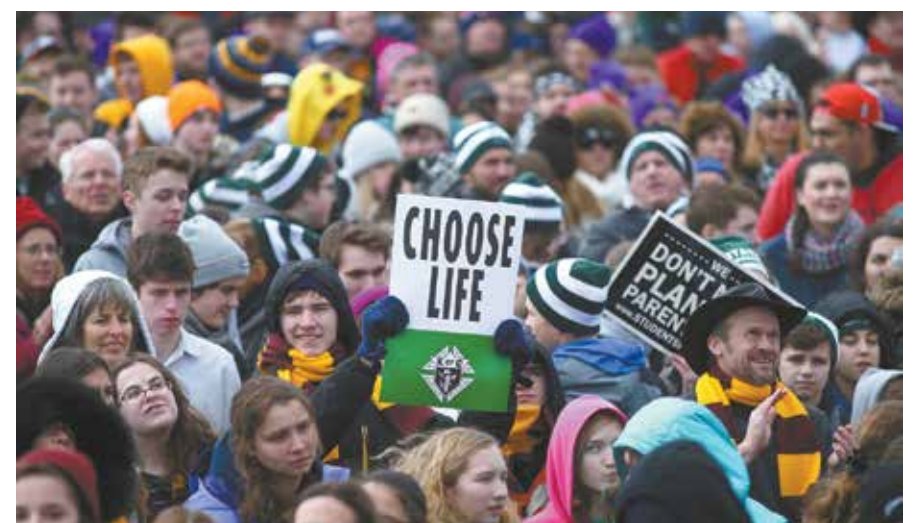
The Northwest Center serves hundreds of women every year, said Gallucci. “We offer love and

support to women and their families, no matter their circumstances.”

“At the early stages of the pro-life movement, providing alternatives to abortion was at the heart of the movement,” noted Donovan, adding that pregnancy centers are leading the movement all over the U.S.

Mancini ended the briefing with a challenge for all: “What will you sacrifice to build a culture of life?”

CNS Editor’s Note: More information about March for Life 2018 can be found at <http://marchforlife.org/mfl-2018/rally-march-info>.



Crowds of young Catholics listen to Pro-Life speakers
(photo credit: CNS photo/Tyler Osburn)

EPARCHIAL EVENTS FOR THE NATIONAL PRAYER VIGIL FOR LIFE

THURSDAY, JANUARY 18, 2018

BASILICA OF THE NATIONAL SHRINE OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION, WASHINGTON, DC
9:30 PM- 10:30 PM NIGHT PRAYER - BYZANTINE COMPLINE
CELEBRANT – MOST REV. KURT R. BURNETTE, BISHOP OF PASSAIC
HOMILIST – ARCHBISHOP LEONARD BLAIR, ARCHBISHOP OF HARTFORD
RESPONSES – SLAVA MEN’S CHORUS



FRIDAY, JANUARY 19, 2018

EPIPHANY OF OUR LORD BYZANTINE CATHOLIC CHURCH, ANNANDALE, VA
10:00AM DIVINE LITURGY FOR LIFE
CELEBRANT – MOST REV. KURT R. BURNETTE, BISHOP OF PASSAIC

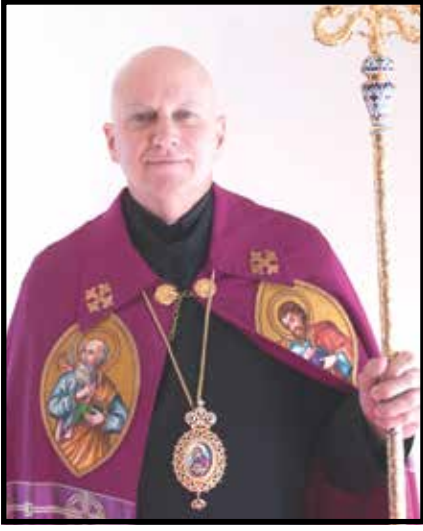


Eparchial priest authors major new book—p6

Bishop’s Annual Appeal—p7

Convert received—p8

New Byzantine Catholic Mission forming in Charlotte, NC, area—p15



I LIFT UP MY EYES...

Pastoral Reflections of Bishop Kurt



SHE ASKS FOR PEACE FOR THE WORLD

When Samuel the prophet and judge became advanced in years, the people came to him and asked for a king “such as all the other nations have.” God Himself tried to talk them out of it. Through Samuel, God warned them that the King would “take your sons and make them serve with his chariots and horses, and they will run in front of his chariots. Some he will assign...to plow his ground and reap his harvest, and still others to make weapons of war...He will take your daughters to be perfumers and cooks and bakers. He will take the best of your fields and vineyards and olive groves and give them to his attendants...the best of your cattle and donkeys he will take for his own use. He will take a tenth of your flocks, and you yourselves will become his slaves. When that day comes, you will cry out for relief from the king you have chosen...” In other words, when the people chose an earthly king instead of God, he would spend his time waging wars and taking their property away from them. It seems some things never change! Our modern governments take our wages to wage war incessantly, but they take a lot more than one tenth.



Christian Martyrs of Nagasaki, Japan

At the beginning of the 20th Century, our president received a Nobel Peace Prize for helping end a war, but a powerful woman was working behind the scenes to bring about peace, and she isn't mentioned in the history books, nor did she receive a Nobel Prize. The story starts in Japan in the year 1600. The endless battles in Japan between warlords ended with the unification of Japan under the Shogun Tokugawa Ieyasu, and, in 1633, the Shoguns began a period of almost total isolation called *Sakoku*, shielding Japan from all outside influences. This policy resulted in the martyrdom of many Japanese Catholic Christians, but that's a story for another day. The isolation lasted until 1853 when American warships arrived in Tokyo harbor and the Japanese government made the decision (or were strongly persuaded) to open up Japan for trade and travel. Japan wasted no time in building up a military, and entering into military conquests like other

nations, sending military forces outside of Japan and onto the mainland.

Within few decades, the young Japan would find itself in a war with one of the greatest armies on earth, but before that happened, the all-knowing God sent a message. On December 11, 1903, an old Russian sailor went to the Monastery of the Lavra in Kiev to pray before the relics. He was one of the last survivors of the siege of Sebastopol during the Crimean War. (Interestingly enough, the Crimean War was triggered by the insistence of the Czar on protecting Eastern Christians in the collapsing Ottoman Empire. I think very few Americans are aware that when the Tsar sold Alaska to the United States, he left the money in trust in the United States to care for the spiritual needs of the Russian Orthodox natives in Alaska. To this day, large parts of Alaska are Orthodox, and there is still a small church in the village and the children are taught to say the *Otče Naš* in Old Slavonic.)

Returning to our aged sailor in Kiev, one night he was awakened by an astonishing vision. The Mother of God appeared to him, together with the Archangel Michael and the Archangel Gabriel. In her hands she was holding the icon “not-made-with-human-hands.” She was standing with her back to a harbor, with two broken swords under her feet. Two small angels held an imperial crown above her head. And in the heights was the Most High God enthroned on six winged seraphim as described by the prophet Isaiah. The Mother of God then spoke to the sailor and told him that soon Russia would be in a brutal war on far off shores, that many sorrows were in store for her. The Theotokos then told the sailor to paint an icon of what he had seen. If that icon were in the city of Port Arthur, the true faith would conquer paganism and the Russian fighters would be have victory under her patronage. Then a bright light filled the room, and the vision vanished. The beautiful woman was not referring to Port Arthur in Texas, but (believe it or not) there is a seaport in China about 125 miles from the border of North Korea that was called Port Arthur after a British naval captain. Port Arthur is now called Lüshun in Chinese and was called Ryojun by the Japanese.

At the time of our story, Port Arthur was part of China, but was leased by the Russian government who fortified it and built a church dedicated to St. Nicholas. The Russian government wanted a warm water port, and Port Arthur filled the need. The Russians built railroads through the region to reach the port.

As Japan and Russia vied for control of Korea and north east China, negotiations broke down. On February 8, 1904, Japan declared war on Rus-

sia, but three hours before the declaration was received, the Japanese navy attacked the Russian navy at Port Arthur. Russia had moved large parts of its fleet to the far east when the Kaiser promised not to make war on the other side. The Kaiser was encouraging war with Japan to protect “the white race, and with it, Christian civilization, against the yellow race,” and their letters show that the Tsar was sincerely trying to avoid war. In one telegram Kaiser Wilhelm even called Tsar Nicholas “You innocent angel!”

Back in Kiev, the people remembered the prediction of the Blessed Lady, and began to collect money to commission an icon according to her instructions. The money should come from the people, so no one was allowed to give more than 5 kopeks, and soon 10,000 people had donated. Pavel Fedorovich Shtondra refused to accept the fee, but wrote (painted) the icon in March of 1904. Around the edge was written, “To the blessing and sign of triumph of the Christ loving Russian warriors from the Holy Lavra of Kiev and 10,000 pilgrims and friends”. (The icon shown with this article has different words.) The icon was blessed during Holy Week and sent to Admiral Verkhovsky in St. Petersburg, arriving by Easter.

Four thousand miles away in Port Arthur, things were not going well. The Japanese blockaded the port, and then began a siege in April 1904. A Russian battleship was sunk immediately, and another crippled by mines. Russia's best naval strategist, Admiral Stepan Osipovich Makarov, died when the battleship *Petropavlovsk* sank. Between mines and German artillery, the Japanese sank every capital ship in the Russian navy in the Pacific.

In St. Petersburg, meanwhile, all of the important aristocrats and local authorities were coming by the apartment of Admiral Verkhovsky to admire the new icon. The Metropolitan Archbishop of St. Petersburg came to the apartment and reminded the admiral that the icon was to be sent to Port Arthur. Even with the news of the slaughter in the Far East, the admiral continued to dawdle. Eventually, Empress Maria Fedoro-



A Righteous War to Chastise the Russians The Destroyer Forces Night Attack (1904)

vna, the mother of Tsar Nicholas, took matters into her own hands. Admiral Nikolai Illarionovich Skrydlov was appointed to replace Makarov, and the Dowager Empress had the icon removed from the apartment of the cunctator and, after a Moleben, the icon was transferred to the car-

riage of Admiral Skrydlov. Skrydlov delayed his departure for the Far East because of family matters, and, by then, the siege of Port Arthur prevented access, so he travelled instead to Vladivostok. The Admiral petitioned for permission to place the icon in the church in Vladivostok, and the Empress gave permission by telegram, so it was finally presented for public veneration at the Cathedral on August 2, 1904. The contemporary accounts describe a scene of great emotion as crowds of people, including soldiers and sailors and officers, wept and prayed before the icon for an end to the violence.

The people asked insistently why the icon was not transported to Port Arthur as the heavenly message had indicated. A sailor named Plenkov attempted to deliver a hand-painted copy to Port Arthur by ship in October, but the ship returned to Vladivostok after encountering a heavy storm. Then a retired captain named Nikolai Nikolaevich Fedorov read about the impasse in the newspapers in St. Petersburg. He received a blessing from his *starets* or spiritual father, none other than John of Kronstadt, and set out for the east. He arrived in Vladivostok on November 7th at the same time as a telegram from the Empress Maria, and on the Feast of the Presentation of the Mother of God on November 21. After a Liturgy in the cathedral and a Moleben, he departed on the Norwegian steamer Eric with the icon safely in a case. As a matter of history, the icon never made it to Port Arthur. Port Arthur surrendered to the Japanese in late December or early January depending on whether you use the new calendar or the old calendar. Fedorov delivered the icon to the army officers, and it was eventually returned to Vladivostok. The war continued with enormous bloodshed. In total, 40,000 to 70,000 Russians died, and 80,000 to 86,000 Japanese.

Despite the dilatory behavior and incompetence of the aristocrats and officers, God heard the prayers of the ordinary people and did not neglect the promise of peace delivered through the Virgin. On the other side of the planet, the unlikely pacifier was our own 26th president, Theodore Roosevelt, Jr. In February of 1905, Roosevelt sent word to the Tsar through his ambassador in St. Petersburg, but Nicholas was uninterested at first, yet believing in victory. The Japanese were also uninterested, but after the Battle of Mukden with heavy losses on both sides, the Japanese began looking for a solution. After two thirds of the Russian fleet were destroyed at the Battle of Tsushima at the end of May, the Tsar too was open to negotiations. On June 7, 1905, Roosevelt met with a Japanese diplomat, and the next day he received a positive reply from Russia.

President Roosevelt chose Portsmouth, New Hampshire, for the site of the peace conference. The Japanese delegation arrived led by Komura Jutaro the Foreign Minister of Japan, and the Russian delegation by Sergei Yulyevich Witte. Witte was the highly regarded former Finance Minister

of Russia. Like Cassandra, he desperately warned the Tsar not to enter World War One. Interestingly enough, his secret memoirs, completed in 1912, were kept in a bank vault in Bayonne and were published in 1921. Although the conference is called the Portsmouth Peace Conference,



Treaty of Portsmouth

the diplomats stayed at the Hotel Wentworth on the island of New Castle, New Hampshire, and each day they traveled across the Pisataqua River to the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard at Kittery, Maine, where the formal negotiations proceeded. In fact, informal meetings took place all around the city of Portsmouth, and tourists visit the locations on the "Portsmouth Peace Treaty Trail" today. The naval building was called the General Stores Building at the time, and President Roosevelt had mahogany furniture manufactured to look like the cabinet room in Washington and delivered to the shipyard. Both sides took a hard line at the beginning, but compromises were reached, and after twelve sessions in August of 1905, the Treaty of Portsmouth was signed on September 5th at the Hotel Wentworth.

The treaty was extremely unpopular in Japan. The Japanese public was aware of the series of victories by their forces, but were not aware of the exhaustion of the country's military and economic resources. Seeing the treaty as shameful, the Japanese rioted and the government fell on January 7, 1906. American public opinion was heavily on the side of Japan throughout the negotiations, seeing Russia as the aggressor, and anti-American demonstrations in Tokyo after the treaty were a shock to the Americans. The compromise was equally unpopular with the Russian people. Nevertheless, the treaty did create three decades of peace between Japan and Russia. The United States became significant in world diplomacy, and President Roosevelt was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1906. Although he was closely involved in the negotiations, he was physically never present in Portsmouth. He monitored the situation and worked from Washington. Now the large mahogany conference table is in a museum in Japan.

So what became of the icon? It never arrived in Port Arthur, and disappeared from the Vladivostok cathedral during the Bolshevik revolution. However, as the Angel Gabriel said to Zechariah, even though he doubted, God's plan will come to pass. In 1998, some pilgrims to the holy land from the far east found the icon in an antique

store in Jerusalem, though some dispute that it is the original. It was purchased and is now kept in Vladivostok. A new church in honor of the icon was opened in Vladivostok on Easter of 2003, 100 years after the appearance of the Theotokos to an old sailor in Kiev. The feast day of the icon is August 16 (old calendar) on the calendar of the Russian Orthodox Church. The icon has now traveled to Port Arthur in China a number of times, and in 2003 was taken to Fatima, Portugal.

In my last parish, I gave a t-shirt with the Icon of the Mother of God of Port Arthur to Agnes Adamsko, one of the founders of the parish. When she took it home with the history, her husband Al became excited and told her he was in those places in World War II. They spent the evening looking at atlases as he told her all about his adventures there in China sixty years earlier. She glowed the next day as she told me about her pleasant evening with her husband and his adventures across the globe.



Icon of Theotokos of Port Arthur

O most pure Mother of God, you are a mighty defender for those in sorrow. You are a ready help to those in trouble. All the leaders of the heavenly army rejoice with us when they see the Lady and Queen of all praised by the faithful. The spirits of the just also rejoice as they witness the vision of the Queen praying with outstretched arms. She asks for peace for the world, power and strength for our Church, and salvation for our souls.

+Kurt Burnette

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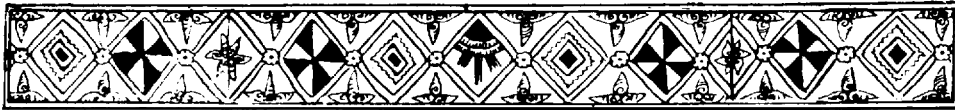
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PEOPLE YOU KNOW

IN CARTERET...

The Ladies' Organization of Saint Elias Church in Carteret, NJ, conducted their annual Christmas Pirohi Sale, which was a huge success. The ladies and their helpers made and sold over 800 dozen potato and cheese, sauerkraut, and prune pirohi to make many of our parishioners and sup-

porters of our church have a great Christmas Eve Holy Supper.

The Ladies' Organization is grateful for the support of Father Ed Semko, in residence, and Father Jack Custer, Parochial Administrator.



Left and Top: Parishioners make pirohi for their Christmas Sale



IN HILLSBOROUGH...

PARISHIONERS DONATE TO TOYS FOR TOTS

Parishioners from Saint Mary in Hillsborough donated a whole car full of toys for the Toys for Tots program. May God bless their charity! Father James Badeaux, Pastor of Saint Mary Parish, is grateful to GCU Lodge 254 and Savanna and Zach Bezick for spearheading the collection. 8 bags of toys were collected, which filled the van (pictured)!



IN TOMS RIVER...

SAINT NICHOLAS CELEBRATION



AROUND THE EPARCHY



IN WESTBURY...

SAINT NICHOLAS CELEBRATION

The Saint Nicholas party at Saint Andrew Church in Westbury had not only a visit from Saint Nicholas to the parishioners of the parish, it also included two U.S. Marines and two Sisters from the Missionary Sisters of Saint Benedict. During the Christmas Fast, as part of the annual parish outreach program, the members of the parish decided to participate in the annual Toys for Tots Campaign sponsored by the U.S. Marines. The parish collected five boxes of toys given to the Marines during the celebration. Two sisters who are friends of Father Nick also joined the celebration that day. The day ended with a thank you from the Marines and the sisters. Father Nicholas Daddona is the administrator of Saint Andrew Parish.



IN BELTSVILLE...

SAINT NICHOLAS CELEBRATION



IN WOODLAND PARK...

SAINT NICHOLAS CELEBRATION

Photos by Dee Strawhand



Father Jack narrated the Saint Nicholas story



Children received gifts and a little lesson from Saint Nicholas



BYZANTINE CATHOLIC SEMINARY OF SAINTS CYRIL AND METHODIUS HOSTS “COME AND SEE” WEEKEND OF DISCOVERY

by David A. Hicks, Development Director of Saints Cyril and Methodius Byzantine Catholic Seminary

Sixteen young men from across the country representing Ruthenian and Ukrainian Byzantine Catholic jurisdictions gathered from the 3rd through the 5th of November at the Byzantine Catholic Seminary of Saints Cyril and Methodius in Pittsburgh, PA, as its seminarians hosted their annual “Come and See” Weekend of Discovery.

Invited to this retreat were men, ages 18 to 35, single or married, who are considering a vocation to the priesthood in the Byzantine Catholic Church. The atmosphere throughout the weekend was prayerful, positive, and fraternal.

The retreat afforded young men considering a vocation to the priesthood to connect and be together. It included sharing liturgical services and meals with the seminary community, an introduction to the seminary formation program, a tour of the seminary, gatherings with the seminarians, individual mentoring, talks, a panel discussion, and visits to the parishes where seminarians serve on Sunday. An ice cream social and evening recreation contributed to the friendly atmosphere. Added to this year’s program was a presentation by a married priest. One of the participants, Michael Huddas, of the Eparchy of Parma (Ruthenian) noted that this talk “was extremely helpful to me because I myself am married. They stressed that without the love, support, and sacrifice of their wives they would not be able to follow their vocation in the Seminary. So not only does the seminarian have a vocation but so does the wife as two became one flesh.”

Founded in 1950, Saint Cyril and Methodius is a free-standing, English-speaking theological seminary, welcoming all those seeking the knowl-

edge possessed by the Eastern ecclesial traditions. The seminary is authorized to grant graduate degrees by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and accredited by the Association of Theological Schools. It operates as a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization incorporated in Pennsylvania, and is governed by a board of directors under the leadership of the Metropolitan Archbishop of Pittsburgh.



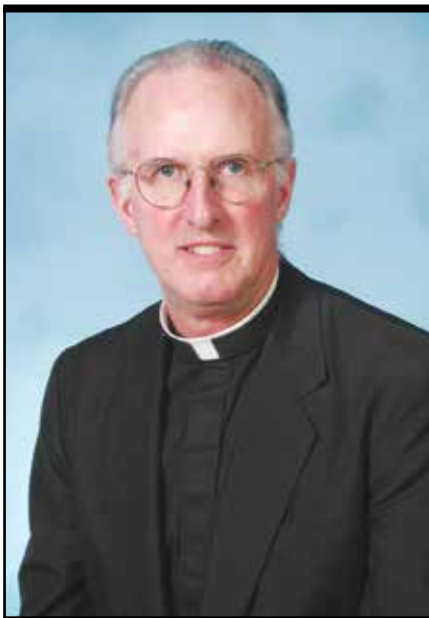
Come and See participant chats with seminarian Paul V. West



Come and See participants pray Small Compline led by Father Will Rupp, Seminary Spiritual Director



Come and See participants with seminarians



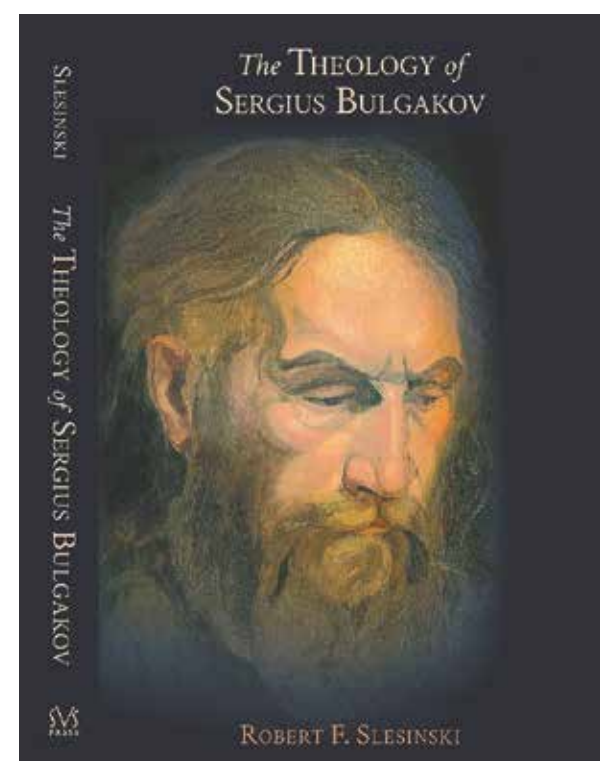
EPARCHIAL PRIEST AUTHORS MAJOR NEW BOOK

We are indebted to Slesinski’s magisterial study and it will set a standard for all future academic work that attempts to understand Bulgakov, who is the awakening giant of modern Orthodox theology.”

Sergius Bulgakov (1871–1944) was the leading Orthodox systematic theologian of the twentieth century. Exiled from Russia by Lenin in 1922, he eventually settled in Paris and was the leading theologian at the Saint Sergius Orthodox Theological Institute there. His speculative thought, especially his sophiological conception of Church dogmatics, proved to be highly problematic for his contemporaries and for fellow Orthodox in the decades following his death in war-torn Paris in 1944. Father Slesinski’s contribution is a clear “Catholic appreciation” of this prolific Orthodox theologian’s thought.

The Theology of Sergius Bulgakov is Father Slesinski’s fourteenth published book. His first book, *Pavel Florensky: A Metaphysics of Love* (1984) was also published by Saint Vladimir’s Seminary Press. Having received his doctorate in philosophy from the Pontifical Gregorian University, Rome, Father Slesinski has since served as Pastor of Saint Nicholas Parish, Yonkers/White Plains, NY; Saints Peter and Paul Parish, Bethlehem, PA; and Holy Trinity Parish, New Britain, CT.

Russian religious philosophy is his academic specialty. *The Theology of Sergius Bulgakov* may be purchased for \$35.00 from Saint Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 575 Scarsdale Road, Yonkers, NY 10707 or at www.svspress.com or 1-800-204-2665.



The portrait of Father Sergius is by Sister Joanna Reitlinger (1898-1988) and is in the private collection of C. Eltchaninoff, printed with the permission of SVS Press

Saint Vladimir’s Seminary Press in Yonkers, NY, has recently published a new work in its *Scholarly Monograph Series*, John Behr, Ph.D., being the Series Editor, namely *The Theology of Sergius Bulgakov*, authored by Father Robert F. Slesinski, Ph.D., a priest of the Eparchy of Passaic. In his endorsement of this monograph, Brandon Gallaher, D.Phil., of the University of Exeter (England), writes: “The present volume is the single best one volume introductory critical study of Bulgakov available now in English. In a time when Bulgakov’s complex theology and profound legacy in modern theology...is finally being widely appreciated, Father Slesinski’s study has given us a sure conceptual guide, with marked critical analysis, not a mere summary...

2017 Bishop's Annual Appeal



O Most Holy Theotokos

October, 2017

My dear friends,
Glory to Jesus Christ!

If we look around in our society now, it seems as though the news gets worse and worse. It seems as though a spiritual darkness is descending on our country, what the scriptures call, "the web that is woven over all nations, the veil that veils all people". If we ignore the news, and focus on our own community and family, we cannot escape it. I asked a local priest the other day how he was doing, and he said he had a rough week, a thirteen year old girl committed suicide in his parish—bullied by schoolmates. In my own family, a young enlisted man has buried too many of his close friends in the military—all suicides. These were not returning warriors with trauma from battle. These were healthy young men who seemed to have everything in life, but found no happiness or purpose in this world.



I thank God that I have our Church for support in these times. I can receive the Body and Blood of Christ, and I can go to confession to a priest. In our Church, we have the light of Jesus Christ to guide us through the darkness. We are guaranteed the truths of the Gospel in times of doubt. The ancient comfort of the Gospel is preserved from Apostolic times fresh and always new. The prophecies about the Messiah are fulfilled today as they were 2000 years ago, "The deaf shall hear the words of a book, and out of the gloom and the darkness, the eyes of the blind shall see. The lowly shall find fresh joy in the Lord, and the poor will rejoice in the Holy One of Israel." The Word of God is spoken to us in the Holy Scriptures and in our sublime Liturgy, filling up the emptiness in our souls and giving us eyes to see beyond the materialism and false friendship of this world. God has blessed our Church on the east coast so abundantly in the past 125 years. And the generous and faithful people of our Church have built a system of parishes from the north to the south so that we can usually find one of our communi-

You are the Gardener of the Gardener of Life. You are the Soil whose Fruit shall not perish, You are the Key to Paradise. You are the mother of both Lamb and Shepherd, You are the Protection against unseen enemies, You are more Spacious than the Heavens. You are the trust of mortals before God, You are the Unfading Rose.

ties a reasonable distance away. Even now, God has sent us young dedicated priests with families to renew our communities, and two young men in the seminary preparing for the priesthood. I am in awe of the dedication and hard work of so many of our priests, both young and old. God has been so generous to our Eparchy that we in turn have been able to help others.

Every year, I ask you to help with the financial support of the integral Eparchy. Your generosity allows us to support struggling parishes and to establish new missions. Even this summer promising new missions have been established in the South to accommodate our faithful moving there. Your support also aids eparchial activities such as pilgrimages and education, to educate seminarians, to bring new priests from Eastern Europe, to care for priests who are unable to work, and even to be generous to our Church in Eastern Europe. You make it possible to bring the Light of Christ to the east coast.

+Kurt Bunette

Pledge now Through December 31, 2017

BISHOP'S ANNUAL APPEAL 2017 BYZANTINE CATHOLIC EPARCHY OF PASSAIC

In gratitude to God and to honor my commitment to the Church, I have prayerfully considered my gift to the Eparchy of Passaic this year and faithfully pledge:

- | | | |
|--------------------------------------|------------|--|
| One Time Pledge Amount | or: | 5 Monthly Payments |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$ 5,000.00 | or: | <input type="checkbox"/> \$ 1,000.00 per month |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$ 2,500.00 | or: | <input type="checkbox"/> \$ 500.00 per month |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$ 1,000.00 | or: | <input type="checkbox"/> \$ 250.00 per month |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$ 500.00 | or: | <input type="checkbox"/> \$ 100.00 per month |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$ 200.00 | or: | <input type="checkbox"/> \$ 40.00 per month |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ | | |

Please make check payable and mail to:

EPARCHY OF PASSAIC, 445 Lackawanna Av., Woodland Park, NJ 07424

or:

PLEDGE online at www.eparchyofpassaic.com

Address corrections or new donor information:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Parish/City/State: _____

PRAYERFULLY PLEDGE & RETURN THIS FORM TO THE EPARCHY BY DEC. 31. All Money received after Dec. 31 will be credited to your 2018 tax year.

CONVERT IS CHRISMATED IN THE FAITH

Beltsville, MD

Shelby Macy has experienced a call to become Catholic for some years. However, she was seeking for confirmation and further explanation of Catholicism which led her to attend the Byzantine Catholic Church in Beltsville, MD, with her friend, who himself was a convert to the Byzantine Church. After much study and enlightenment from the Holy Spirit, Shelby Macy publicly recited the Creed, and experienced for the first time the Mystery of Repentance. She was then chrismated and received the most pure Body and Blood of our Lord, God, and Savior Jesus Christ on Sunday, December 17, 2017. *May God grant to His newly-enlightened servant, Shelby, peace, health, and happiness for many blessed years!*



Shelby Macy receives Holy Eucharist for the first time



Shelby Macy is "sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit" by Father Lewis Rabayda



Chrismation Sponsor, Secular Carmelite John Cahill; newly-chrismated Shelby Macy; Father Lewis Rabayda (Parochial Vicar); and Chrismation Sponsor June Schmitz



Join Father Jim Badeaux on a faith and fun-filled trip!

The Best of Eastern Canada

July 31 - August 7, 2018

"From elegant cities to Mother Nature's Wonders"

8 Day, 7 Night trip featuring:

Montréal, Québec City, Ottawa, Toronto, Miraculous Shrine of Sainte-Anne-de-Beaupré, Basilica of Notre-Dame-du-Cap, Niagara Falls, the 1000 Islands.

Includes:

Full itinerary with 4-star accommodations, airfare, transfers, transportation to the airport, many meals and much more.

Double rate: \$3,059

----- Trip Presentation - January 18! -----

Please call Fr Jim for a full itinerary or to RSVP for presentation

Father Jim Badeaux +1(908)725-0615



Danube River Cruise

14 DAY CRUISE and LAND
Germany, Austria, Slovakia, Hungary, Poland

Hosted by Fr. Ed Cimbala

Pastor of Our Lady of Perpetual Help
Byzantine Catholic Church
Levittown, PA

October 31 – November 13, 2018

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CANTOR INSTITUTE ANNOUNCES COMPREHENSIVE SINGING PROGRAM

Deacon Jeffrey Mierzejewski

Over the past two years, the Metropolitan Cantor Institute has been experimenting with ways to provide cantor education throughout the United States. Based on our experiences, we are inaugurating a comprehensive program beginning in 2018, aimed at ensuring that every parish in the Byzantine Catholic Church has a cantor who can lead the liturgical singing of the parish well, to the glory of God, and in support of the prayer of the faithful.

The new program consists of online classes using the Internet combined with local mentoring where available, and an optional week-

long summer program in Pittsburgh. All classes are taught each year (some twice per year), allowing students to complete the work at their own pace. New students can enter the program in January or July, and complete the entire program in as little as two years.

Two classes are free, open to the public, and can be taken at any time: Introduction to Liturgy and Introduction to the Typikon. Students can register for further courses by submitting a registration form and the course tuition (usually \$75.00 for each eight week course, with discounts available). Course tuition allows us to engage trained voice teachers who are also

cantors to review student work and provide feedback.

We recommend that ALL cantors consider taking the initial class, Introduction to Church Singing, which starts in January. This class covers the essentials of vocal production, the basics of music theory for cantors, and the fundamentals of reading music, and also provides an essential introduction to rhythm and duch (spirit) of our plain chant.

Details and registration: <http://mci.arch-pitt.org/classes>



LONG ISLAND PARISH CELEBRATES ITS "FIRST" FIFTY YEARS Smithtown, Long Island, NY

Resurrection Church in Smithtown on Long Island, NY, celebrated its 50th anniversary on September 17, 2017, with a festal Divine Liturgy and an enjoyable reception. Bishop Kurt was the main celebrant of the Liturgy. Con-celebrants included former pastor Father Jack Custer, Father Joseph Bertha who was a vocation from the parish, and Father Tyler Strand, the current administrator.

A surprise guest accompanied Bishop Kurt: Bishop Milan Lach,

Apostolic Administrator of the Eparchy of Parma, who also con-celebrated. A luncheon reception following featured a performance of the ethnic dance troupe that got its start at Resurrection and has recently returned to having the parish as its base of operations.

Resurrection serves the eastern part of Long Island and is a daughter of the New York City parishes that were home to the first generation of immigrants from Rusyn and Lemko regions in Eastern Europe.

Like many Byzantine Catholic congregations, it now has a membership drawing on many backgrounds and ethnicities.

The most famous period of its history was under the leadership of Father Dan Bitsko who introduced a biennial Festival that drew thousands of visitors to its food and handicraft stalls, and carnival rides! Despite its many challenges, the parish is a vital church family with frequent ethnic food events and meaningful community outreach

projects.

Recent discoveries of lost archives and books on American architecture show that not only the church but also the long-neglected rectory building are, in fact, historically and culturally important. Plans to renovate the rectory are underway in hope of providing a residence for the priest. Not willing to be counted out, The Church of the Resurrection is proving true to its name.



ASK A PRIEST A QUESTION

Father Vasyl Chepelsky



THE PERPETUAL VIRGINITY OF THE THEOTOKOS

What are the grounds for the Church to believe that Blessed Mary remained virgin after the birth of Jesus? Doesn't the New Testament say that Jesus had "brothers and sisters"?

According to some, Mary's virginity after the birth is denied by the Gospel texts which record the existence of four "brothers of Jesus": James, Joseph, Simon and Judas (Mt. 13:55-56; Mk. 6:3). The same verses also mention unnamed sisters of Jesus. Still others refer to Mt. 1:25: "but did not have marital relations with her *until* she gave birth to a son, whom he called Jesus," stating that after the birth of Jesus Mary had other children.

Let us look closer on these quotes and bring some clarification.

In regards to the first statement, we should note that no specific term exists in Hebrew and Aramaic (spoken by Jesus and His disciples) to express the word "cousin", and that the terms "brother" and "sister," therefore had a far broader meaning, which included several degrees of relationship. So, those referred to as His brothers and sisters, were His cousins.

In regards to the second statement, understanding the nuances of the biblical language again brings us a lot of help. Let us look at 1 Samuel 15:35, which says: "*Until* the day Samuel died, he did not go to see Saul again, though Samuel mourned for him." The word "*until*" does not mean in a given language that something occurred afterwards, as it becomes obvious from this text: Samuel could not possibly go to see Saul *after* he died.

Didymus the Blind explains: "It helps us to understand the terms 'first-born' and 'only-begotten' when the Evangelist tells that Mary remained a virgin 'until she brought forth her first-born son' [Matt. 1:25]; for neither did Mary, who is to be honored and praised above all others, marry anyone else, nor did she ever become the Mother of anyone else, but even after childbirth she remained always and forever an immaculate virgin" (*The Trinity* 3:4 [A.D. 386]).

"There are no grounds for thinking that the will to remain a virgin which Mary expressed at the moment of the Annunciation was subsequently changed. The Church has always professed her belief in the perpetual virginity of Mary. The most ancient texts, when referring to the conception of Jesus, call Mary simply "virgin," inferring that they considered this quality a permanent fact with regard to her whole life," – stated Holy Father John Paul II during his General Audience on August, 28, 1996. He further explained: "The expression 'ever virgin' was taken up by the Second Council of Constantinople (553), which affirms: The Word of God, 'incarnate of the holy and glorious Mother of God and ever virgin Mary, was born of her.' This doctrine is confirmed by two other Ecumenical Councils, the Fourth Lateran Council (1215) and the Second Council of Lyons (1274), and by the text of the definition of the dogma of the Assumption (1950) in which Mary's perpetual virginity is adopted as one of the reasons why she was taken up in body and soul to heavenly glory. In a brief formula, the Church traditionally presents Mary as 'virgin before, during and after giving birth,' affirming, by indicating these three moments, that she never ceased to be a virgin."

Many of the great saints and spiritual elders of the early Church speak about Mary's virginity. For example, Epiphanius of Salamis says: "We believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of all things, both visible and invisible; and in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God ... who for us men and for our salvation came down and took flesh, that is, was born perfectly of the holy ever-virgin Mary by the Holy Spirit" (*The Man Well-Anchored* 120 [A.D. 374]). "And to holy Mary, [the title] 'Virgin' is invariably added, for that holy woman remains undefiled" (*Medicine Chest Against All Heresies* 78:6 [A.D. 375]). Saint Augustine states: "In being born of a Virgin who chose to remain a Virgin even before she knew who was to be born of her, Christ wanted to approve virginity rather than to impose it. And He wanted virginity to be of free choice even in that woman in whom He took upon Himself the form

of a slave" (*Holy Virginity* 4:4 [A.D. 401]), and: "It was not the visible sun, but its invisible Creator who consecrated this day for us, when the Virgin Mother, fertile of womb and integral in her virginity, brought Him forth, made visible for us, by whom, when He was invisible, she too was created. A Virgin conceiving, a Virgin bearing, a Virgin pregnant, a Virgin bringing forth, a Virgin perpetual. Why do you wonder at this, O man?" (*Sermons* 186:1 [A.D. 411]).

Another important historical document which supports the teaching of Mary's perpetual virginity is the *Protoevangelium of James*, which was written probably less than sixty years after the conclusion of Mary's earthly life (around A.D. 120), when memories of her life were still vivid in the minds of many (cf. <https://www.catholic.com/tract/mary-ever-virgin>).

This doctrine was confirmed by the Second Vatican Council, which states that the firstborn Son of Mary "did not diminish His Mother's virginal integrity but sanctified it" (*Lumen gentium*, n. 57).

Father William Saunders offers good thoughts on the subject, when he quotes Karl Rahner: "... (Mary's) childbearing must have been essentially different from other women since she was free of the effects of original sin. Her virginity, childbearing, and motherhood are together in union with the will of God."

We as Catholics firmly believe that Mary is "ever virgin." *The Catechism of the Catholic Church* asserts, "The deepening of faith in the virginal motherhood led the Church to confess Mary's real and perpetual virginity even in the act of giving birth to the Son of God made man" (CCC, # 499).

If you have ever wondered what Catholics really believe or just questioned "why is that" about a certain topic, you now have the opportunity to find out. We look forward to your many questions....so ask away! **ECL**



LIFE, LOVE, AND THE HUMAN PERSON

By Ann M. Koshute, MTS

LETTING IN THE LIGHT

A friend likes to quote an ancient Chinese curse: "May you live in interesting times." I don't know if it is an actual "ancient curse," but these words are relevant as stories of alleged (and proven) sexual harassment, abuse, and predatory behavior dominate the headlines. Having lived underground as "open secrets" for years, they suddenly burst forth in a volcanic blast rocking entertainment, media, and politics. The Catholic Church has weathered its own revelations of earth-shaking sexual abuse, and the aftershocks continue to surface pain. Beloved actors, trusted

journalists, and politicians have been exposed for inappropriate or violent sexual advances, either in the past or in ongoing patterns of predation. These revelations have spawned an "interesting" dynamic of arguments over what really is inappropriate, and what we can let pass as flirtation, or "boys being boys." Good people get twisted up in knots explaining away bad behavior, or rejecting the notion of "sexual harassment" as an overly-sensitive reaction. At the same time, now that these abuses are exposed and those responsible are held to account, a certain darkness pierces

the light. Women are rightly speaking out, but some of the speech is tinged with revenge. Certain activists are calling not only for justice, but for the tables to turn; for *women* to exert "their power," no longer to be dominated, but instead to dominate. There is danger that the rule of law can be subverted by the "rule of the angry mob." This is a tough topic, but Christians must confront it. What's playing out in the media (and in families and workplaces) is old as time itself. We must respond in ways demonstrating that Christ "make[s] all things new." (Revelation 21:5)

In the Beginning God created the world and He loved it. God made Man and Woman as His icons, created to be like Him, and placed them in the midst of Creation. Creation was His gift to them, but more importantly, God gifted Man and Woman to each other. God loved them for their own sakes and expressed His love through them: Man and Woman loved each other with God's love. Peace reigned in their hearts because they complemented each other, recognizing God in each other. Unashamed of their nakedness (Genesis 2:27), they held each other in mutual esteem. There was no shame because nothing was hidden; there was no agenda held in secret, and nothing to fear. Man and Woman saw each other in Truth as persons, not objects to be acquired, used and discarded. They beheld each other with (what Pope St. John Paul II calls) the peace of the interior gaze. How quickly it all changed.

The Serpent invaded the bliss of the Garden, targeting the Woman because of her aptness for nurturing life, and the ability to observe a need and meet it. The Serpent hated and feared the vulnerability and strength of her natural maternity (physical and spiritual), and her equality with the Man. His purpose was to separate them from God, and from each other. He succeeded, insofar as he engaged the Woman in conversation, and she wavered in her trust of God's word, freely choosing herself over the One who created her. The Man quickly followed suit, not "tricked" by the Woman, but freely choosing himself (and the false promise of god-status) over both the Woman and the Creator. The consequences of

disobedience were immediate: Man and Woman knew they were naked. The peace of their mutual gaze was distorted by mistrust, and the newfound "power" to dominate and manipulate. The relationship between Man and Woman seemed irreparably damaged as they covered themselves and fled the scene upon hearing God's voice. And so, it seems to us today, as the news—and our own experience of the world—indicate. Powerful men dominate women, treat them as objects of use and lord it over them (Genesis 3:16). The balance of power—and the ability to dominate—skews toward men, but women developed their own weapons with which to engage the fight. From peace and the vulnerability that allows for love, the male-female relationship too often degenerates into a struggle for dominance. The Serpent knew just where to strike.

Where does this leave us? Sexual misconduct of all varieties will continue to dominate the headlines as the light shines in the darkest areas of human experience. But for Christians, this needn't be a sign of despair. We must recognize ourselves as God's icons, so that we may see and treat each other in kind. We must teach children—boys and girls—their value and personal dignity, by our words and our actions. We must speak up when human persons are violated. In the Beginning, Man and Woman were created for love, but traded that for personal power. Ever since, power and pride have threatened the love proper to male-female relationships. Yet, while the sin was still fresh and suspicion between them grew, God first preached the Gospel to Man and Woman—



Adam and Eve, engraving by Albrecht Dürer, 1504

and us (Genesis 3:15). Justice and punishment are necessary—but mercy, contrition, and forgiveness are the gifts that repair and restore us as men and women, and the relationship between us.

Sin continues to taint all aspects of our lives. What is the Christian response? Changing my life, my attitudes, and my behavior so that I am conformed to Christ; and inviting the World to know the Truth of who we are created to be who we are in His eyes. God is the Just Judge who transforms curses into opportunities for redemption through His merciful love. Wouldn't it be interesting if we could do the same. **ECL**



SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES

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

MIROVANJE: A BIBLICAL TRADITION

Did family or friends who do not normally attend the Divine Liturgy join you over the Christmas holidays? Did you find yourself trying to explain mirovanje to them as you were heading up the aisle? Did it sound like this: "Put the money in the basket, take the bread and the priest will bless you with oil." "Why?" "Umm, ... it's just what we do." In fact, mirovanje is not some quaint old country custom. Its roots run deep in the Old and New Testaments.

At Vespers for feasts of the Lord, the Mother of God, and more prominent saints, we bless five loaves of bread, some wheat, wine and oil. The wine and bread, dipped in the oil, were originally a snack offered to the faithful who kept all-night vigils on these feasts. While snacking in church may have been a no-no in Baba's book, the custom has a firm place in God's book.

Apart from whole-burnt offerings (holocausts), most of what was sacrificed in the Old Testament was actually eaten by the priests and people who made the offering. Especially on feast days like Passover, Pentecost, and Booths, these sacrificial meals were joyous events. Deuteronomy (16:11) makes rejoicing a commandment: "You shall rejoice before the Lord your God, you and your son and your daughter, your male and female servants, the Levite within your gates, the stranger, with orphan and the widow who lives among you" Notice that the priests and the needy are specifically included here. The sacrificial feast at the sanctuary can also be seen

in the story of Hannah, the mother of Samuel (1 Samuel 1).

As the blessing prayer makes clear, the number of loaves recalls how Jesus multiplied five loaves to feed more than five thousand people (Matthew 14:13-21; Luke John 9:10-17; John 6:1-14). The prayer asks that we will never lack these basic food items in our own community. Along with bread, which the Bible calls "the staff" of life (Isaiah 3:1; Ezekiel 4:16; see also Psalm 104:14-15), the foods most often mentioned are wheat, wine and oil (Deuteronomy 7:13; 11:14; 12:17; 14:23; 18:4; 28:51; 32:13-14; 1 Chronicles 9:29; 2 Chronicles 2:15; 31:5; 32:28; Nehemiah 5:11; Psalm 104:15; Jeremiah 31:12; Hosea 2:8-9; Joel 2:19; Haggai 1:11; Revelation 6:6; Revelation 18:13). All three come from specialized crops that could easily be blighted. The failure of any one of these crops could spell disaster for an entire community. A biblical meal would look poor if it did not include bread, wine, and oil.

Nowadays, we do not usually share the wine (although there's no reason why we couldn't) and we do not dip the bread in the oil. Instead, we are anointed with the oil, which is often scented. In the culture of the Bible, guests were anointed with oil as a sign of welcome. Jesus Himself mentions this to a not-so-welcoming host in Luke 6:46. Psalm 104:15 celebrates how oil makes our faces "shine." The mirovanje oil is often called the "oil of gladness," a phrase taken from Psalm 45:7. There, it is the king who is anointed. Ultimately

the Psalm points to the Anointed, the Messiah, Jesus Christ. But "all you who have been baptized into Christ have been clothed with Christ" (Galatians 3:27), and we have been promised the inheritance of the Kingdom of Heaven. The festive anointing reminds us of our destiny as adopted heirs of the Kingdom.

The money offered at mirovanje is just another way for the faithful to participate in the joyous feast day sacrifice. By custom, it belongs to the pastor of the parish, according to the biblical principle that the priest lives from the altar (Deuteronomy 18:1; 1 Corinthians 9:13). Some priests may choose to designate worthy charities and monastic communities as beneficiaries of the mirovanje gifts offered by the faithful. For example, mirovanje offerings at Holy Wisdom parish in Flanders NJ, help to support a local soup kitchen. In this way, we fulfill the Old Testament commandment to include the poor and the marginalized in the joy of our feasts (Deuteronomy 16:11; see also Psalm 22:26).

Maybe you're wondering what happens to the wheat? It should either be sown to grow more wheat or milled to make more bread.

A feast day sacrifice, a blessed feast day snack, a token of hospitality in God's house, a prayer for prosperity, and an occasion for charity: there's a lot going on in mirovanje and it all goes back to God's Word. **ECL**



UNDERSTANDING ICONS

Father Joseph Bertha, Ph.D.

MARIAPOCS

Part 1

Introduction

As a youth, I remember sitting up in the choir loft at Saint Nicholas of Myra Byzantine-Ruthenian Catholic Church in Yonkers, NY, gazing at the icon screen, marveling at the floor to ceiling structure and wondering what they all signified. Just behind the Northern Deacon Door, Father Loya prayed the Rite of Preparation at the *Zertvennik*, the Table of Sacrifice. Just above this side altar, in a rectangular space spanning some two feet by three feet, a painting depicting the Mariapocs icon hovered midair above the monastic complex, not exactly a replica but an idealized conception by the painter.

To my knowledge, this is one of the few such depictions of Maria-Pocs icon in any pre-20th century Byzantine-Ruthenian Church in the USA! What also makes this image distinctive is the fact that Saint Nicholas of Myra Church was incorporated into New York State law in 1892 as a Hungarian-Slavonic Greek Catholic Church.



Side Altar Icon of Mariapoc in Yonkers, NY

Incredibly, this painting, dating from 1905, commemorates the third weeping of the Wonderworking icon; therefore, it is physical proof of Rusyn devotion to Our Lady of Maria-Pocs in the United States of America, in Yonkers, New York!

From my youth, I always wondered, during visits to my birthplace, why the Virgin Mother of Pocs wept her tears. There were no great wars, famines, catastrophes in the 17th century. Through the ensuing years, ordination to the priesthood, and many, almost countless, pilgrimages to the holy basilica, I have slowly begun to discover that there were and are several reasons for the Holy Theotokos to weep.

A brief Historical background

A small wooden Greek Catholic church in the village of Pocs, a town in the north-eastern part of present day Hungary (in the seventeenth century part of the Habsburg Empire, a predominately Reformed Calvinist area), was under the Bishop of the Eparchy of Mukachevo in Uzhorod (the site of the Union of Uzhorod in 1646). The Eparchy of Mukachevo was under the administration of the Roman Catholic Bishops of Eger until Empress Maria Teresa issued a decree creating Mukachevo as no longer subject to the Latin Rite Ordinary of Eger. She also formally labeled the faithful "Greek Catholics" and donated funds for the Cathedral of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross in Uzhorod to be built as the seat of the eparchy. The *dikerion* and *trikerion* she donated and inscribed with her name are still used by the Bishop. (see photo)



Dikerion donated by Empress Maria Teresa

The humble wooden church originally erected by the Protestant Bathory landowners demonstrated their respect for and devotion to their Greek Catholic serfs serving under their administration on the farmlands surrounding Pocs. A local iconographer, Ivan Papp, brother of the parish priest painted this icon of the Virgin and Child for the newly built church.

First Weeping occurs during the Divine Liturgy

On Sunday, November 4, 1696, this icon of the Holy Virgin Theotokos, located in the icon screen, wept tears during the celebration of the Divine Liturgy. Emperor Leopold ordered that the icon brought to the imperial capital. It first traveled to the Roman Catholic church in Kálló on March 1, 1697; then the route was as follows: through Nagykálló, Tokaj, Kassa (Kosice), Pest, Buda,

and Győr. The Mariapocs icon arrived in Vienna on **July 4, 1697**. The Emperor had the icon enshrined at the main altar at the Imperial Basilica of Saint Stephen. The wonderworking icon remains on display in a side chapel in the basilica to this day.

Because of his deep devotion to the Theotokos, the Emperor invoked the weeping Mariapocs icon to protect the Habsburg empire against the Ottomans attack. Shortly thereafter, Prince Eugene of Savoy (18 October 1663-21 April 1736), in command of the Hapsburg army, defeated the Turkish army at Zenta (present day Serbia) on **September 11, 1697**. The Christian monarchs of Europe as well as the Austrian Habsburg monarch attributed the victory to the intercession of the Mother of God of Mariapocs. In thanksgiving, Leopold had a beautiful frame with 57 roses to adorn the Holy Icon. Through the ensuing decades and generations, the icon was displayed in the Imperial Basilica.

The faithful of Pocs missed their beloved icon, so a replacement was painted. So, at the end of the seventeenth century, both Vienna and Pocs held identical versions of the Maria-Pocs icon.

Second weeping occurs at morning celebration on August 1, 1715

On Thursday, August 1, 1715, in Pocs, the Cantor Janos Molnar discovered that the icon was weeping while the parochial vicar, Mihaly Pap, celebrated the morning service. Many miracles occurred soon afterwards as pilgrims began to flock to the church to petition the weeping Mariapocs icon for healing.

After the second weeping of 1715, plans were laid to build a large stone church to accommodate the rising number of pilgrims. After almost four decades, it was built and solemnly consecrated in 1756. The Basilian Fathers were granted custody of the Pilgrim church, which was converted into a Basilian Monastery.

Third weeping: December 3, 1905 (November 21, Entrance of the Theotokos, Julian Old Calendar)

In 1905, the Mariapocs icon wept once again and has remained the last instance of a miraculous weeping. The Basilian monk Kelemen Gavris noticed tears coming from the right

eye down her cheek. This continued until December 19th and then for the 30th-31st of December. A handkerchief that wiped the tears is enclosed in a reliquary directly under the icon. (see photo)



Handkerchief containing the Icon's Tears

In 1946, at the 250th anniversary of the first weeping of the Mariapocs icon, Pope Pius XII elevated the Shrine Church to the status of Minor Basilica.

On August 18, 1991, Pope Saint John Paul II presided over a Divine Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom before a group of over half a million faithful gathered at an open-air-field altar set up close to the Basilica.

In 2005, the white silk covering of the Mariapocs weeping icon was removed, in order to display its similarity to the Vienna original. The icon was also cleaned and restored in the Hungarian National Gallery at the same time. The church building, furnishings, and wall paintings were restored and re-consecrated solemnly on September 11, 2010.

For over three centuries, countless pilgrims have travelled from vast distances, even by foot, to pay homage to the tear-shedding *Hodegetria* icon of the Holy Theotokos. **ECL**



Closeup of Dikerion inscription

SPIRITUAL REFLECTIONS

Father Lewis Rabayda



PUT ASIDE VICES TO RECEIVE HIS BODY AND BLOOD

Most of us were born into a Church that practices infant baptism, and as such, some of us have not experienced a necessary point of conversion. This point of conversion, this confirmation of our faith in God, is what leads us to be committed followers of Jesus Christ and His Apostles. When we have a conversion, we know that we are no longer the same person, but we have become something else, something greater; we have been elevated from being creatures bound to this earth, to being beloved children of God. As such, we are no loner subject to eternal death.

Because we are beloved children of God, have been baptized into Christ, and voluntarily have been clothed with Christ, we will rise with Him when He comes back in His glory. Since we are united to Him in His glory, and since we are united to Him though partaking of His most pure Body and precious Blood, then how can we remain rooted in fornication, disordered passions, evil desires, lusts, anger, quick tempter, malice, insults, lying, and foul language (Col. 3:5-9)? How can any of these vices be raised up to heaven with Christ at the final resurrection when they provoke God's wrath? They cannot. We, must put these vices aside, and put them aside now. We must put these vices to death in this life, in order for us to live the life that we were called too, were baptized into, and the life that we claim to acknowledge, when we walk that center isle to receive Our Savior, bodily.

If by God's gift of Grace and His help we can put the vices within us to death, then when we receive our Lord in the Eucharist, we will be receiving the confirmation of our salvation, and a strengthening of our souls and bodies. But, as Saint Paul says, "Whoever, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of profaning the body and blood of the Lord... For any one who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment upon himself" (1Co. 11:27-29).

If we tend to fall into any of these vices, then we are reminded that these vices are part of our old self, they belong to the earth, and they do not belong to those who have been made new men, and those who are growing in knowledge and are being formed anew in the image of our Creator. But if we do fall back into the vices of our old self, then know that every moment is another opportunity for us to experience a new conversion towards God, and to take up again a new beginning on our path towards practicing all of the virtues, and our path towards rising with Christ at the final resurrection.

The Mystery of Repentance (confession) is the only path back from vice and sin for those who have previously been baptized into Christ. But some avoid this opportunity of conversion, some avoid confirming their faith in Jesus Christ because they are not convinced in the splendor of the Feast, they are not convinced of the Great-

ness of the Eucharistic Banquet.

What excuses do we give to avoid the banquet we have been invited to? What excuses do we give to avoid our spiritual life, so that we can remain in the comfort of our old self? What is it in our lives that we place before the feasting and the joy of God? Because if we do not accept our invitation now, if we do not put aside all vice now, and if we do not partake of this great and splendid feast now, then God will call others to fill our place. The seat in heaven prepared specifically for each one of us, will be given to another, who, when called and invited, accepted the invitation, and properly prepared themselves for the Great Eucharistic Banquet. **ECL**



SCHOOL OF PRAYER

Father G. Scott Boghossian

HALLOWED BE THY NAME

The first petition of the Our Father is "hallowed be Thy name." To "hallow" something is to make it holy or to sanctify it. When we speak of God's name, we mean His reputation. We say that "every person is entitled to their good name," by which we mean that every person is entitled to a good reputation. So, when we pray that God would "hallow" His name, we are asking that He would be known, loved, honored, praised, and glorified. We are asking that every man, woman, and child would love God with all of their heart, soul, mind, and strength (Lk. 10:27) and have no other gods before Him (Ex. 20:3).

When we pray this petition, we are requesting God's best for all people. We were created to glorify, honor, and praise the Almighty God, and we are only fulfilled and happy when we do that which we were created to do (Is. 43:7).

When we pray that God our Father be glorified, we are asking that all people would submit themselves to His sovereign rule. We pray that all people in the world would turn from their errors and embrace the Good News of Jesus Christ and His Catholic Church. Sadly, "all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God" (Rm. 3:23). But God is glorified when we return to Him and start

to live a new life of faith in Christ. To pray "hallowed be Thy name" is to pray for our conversion.

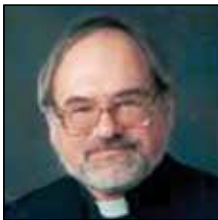
We are also praying that we who call ourselves Christians would live out our faith before the world in such a way that we bring honor and praise to the God we worship. To "hallow God's name," it is essential that we live the values of the Gospel, that we keep God's law as found in the Ten Commandments and the Sermon on the Mount. If we claim to be followers of Christ and do not obey what He taught us, we bring dishonor to God rather than glory and honor. How many people do we know who say that they do not accept or respect the Catholic faith because of how a Catholic acquaintance or even a Catholic priest treated them?

How we worship God in the Divine Liturgy and other church services also reflects on His glory. The beauty of churches, music, vestments, altar covers, icons, chalices, candles, and incense are intended to bring honor and glory to God. How we conduct ourselves in church reflects on God's honor. When you are in church, do you focus on what you are praying, do you participate by singing the hymns and responses, do you listen carefully to the readings, do you make the sign

of the cross with reverence and care? It is sad to see people chatting, looking around bored, sleeping, and not participating. They are inadvertently telling themselves and everyone who sees them that to worship the Holy Trinity is nothing to get excited about and that Jesus Christ and His death on the Cross mean nothing to them. Instead of bringing glory and honor to God, they provoke ridicule and contempt of holy things.

King David writes, "I will bless the LORD at all times; His praise shall continually be in my mouth" (Ps. 34:1). To hallow God's name is to speak approvingly of His will. People who continually complain and gripe are not bringing glory and honor to their Savior. May God forgive us for our constant complaining, griping, and finding fault with everyone and everything. By doing so, we make ourselves miserable, but even worse, we dishonor God Who provides every good thing for us and who is worthy of our constant praise and thanks.

Our Father Who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name! May God grant us the grace to continually bring Him honor, praise, and glory. Amen. **ECL**



THE BYZANTINE LITURGY

By Archpriest David Petras, SEOD

HOW WE CELEBRATE THEOPHANY

The beginning of the life of Jesus Christ from His birth from a virgin mother is told in the Gospels of Saint Matthew and Saint Luke. The story of the beginning of the life of Jesus Christ with His public manifestation at the baptism in the River Jordan is told in the Gospels of Saint Matthew, Saint Mark and Saint Luke. Saint John does not tell the story of Jesus' baptism, but it does tell the story of Saint John the Baptist's testimony that he did see the Spirit come upon Jesus (John 1:32-34), and John points Him out to the people as "the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world" (John 1:29). Moreover, the Eastern and the Western Church celebrate the coming of Jesus into the life of the world in very different ways. The West focuses on the birth of our Lord. On Christmas Day, we see the infinite God take on limited human nature as a small and helpless baby held in the arms of His mother. On Epiphany, the announcement of the Savior is made to all the world as the wise men, not of the chosen people, see the cosmic sign of the star and are led to the new-born King. For the Eastern Church, we see a two-fold birth. The feast of Christmas commemorates God becoming a human being for our sake, giving us, who are also born of a human mother, the hope of deification. The feast of the Theophany, the manifestation

of God in the Trinity, celebrates the baptism of Christ, and so also our own baptisms, which are a spiritual re-birth in Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Like Christmas, the feast of Theophany is celebrated on the weekend before and the weekend after the actual day of the feast. The Gospel of the Sunday before remembers the preaching of Saint John the Baptist. He points to Jesus as the Messiah to come, saying, "I have baptized you with water; He will baptize you with the holy Spirit" (Mark 1:8). This tells us about the baptism we have received. It is truly an entrance into the life of God. In order to be fully alive in God, however, we must repent for the forgiveness of sins. Our baptism was the turning away from sin so that we might rise again with Christ. We must make this choice over and over again in our lives. The Saturday and Sunday before Theophany recalls and commemorates our decision to turn from darkness and towards Christ, the true light. For this reason, Saint Gregory called Theophany the "feast of light."

The day of Theophany itself commemorates our baptism into the life of the Holy Trinity. In the Eastern Church, the baptism of Christ was a manifestation or a revelation of God in the Trin-

ity. When Christ was baptized in the River Jordan, the voice of the Father, unseen by human eyes, witnessed from heaven "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased" (Matthew 3:17). The Spirit descended upon Christ in the form of a dove, as explained by Origen, "wherever there is reconciliation with God there is a dove, as in the case of Noah's ark announcing God's mercy to the world and at the same time making clear that what is spiritual should be meek and without wickedness, simple and without guile" (Fragment 56). The Spirit is both a purifying fire, as announced by the Baptist and seen in the event of Pentecost, and a gentle reconciler, for the dove symbolizes God's peace. At our baptism, therefore, the priest says, "The servant of God is baptized in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." It is as if we go into the waters of the Jordan with Christ. And every time we receive Communion, we receive the body of the Lord baptized in the Jordan, the Father accepts us as His child, and the Spirit, Who has made the bread and wine the body and blood of Christ, comes upon us and deifies and sanctifies us, giving us the beginning of eternal life and forgiving all our sins.

On the weekend after Theophany, the story of Jesus' temptation in the desert is retold. Since Jesus has entered into our lives, and has taken upon Himself the burden of our sins, He also confronts the evil that is present in the world, utterly defeating it, proclaiming what is good news for us but torment to the Evil One, "Get away, Satan! It is written: 'The Lord, your God, shall you worship and him alone shall you serve.'" (Matthew 4:10). We now can overcome the dreariness and death-dealing iniquity of sin, not by our own powers, but in the power of Christ, Who has overcome temptation. Victory is in our grasp, as the letter of Saint Paul to Timothy tells us on the Sunday after Theophany, "From now on the crown of righteousness awaits me, which the Lord, the just Judge, will award to me on that day, and not only to me, but to all who have longer for His appearance" (2 Timothy 4:8) (in Greek, for His "epiphany," the original name of the feast). The Gospel of the Sunday after Theophany tells us what all of the feasts of both Christmas and Theophany have meant for us: we have seen God; "God is with us." It therefore proclaims, "The people who sit in darkness have seen a great light, on those dwelling in a land overshadowed by death, light has arisen" (Matthew 4:16). **ECL**

THE BYZANTINE CATHOLIC
EPARCHY OF PASSAIC
subscribes to the

*Charter for the Protection of
Children and Young People*

adopted by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. The Eparchy, within all its parishes, institutions and programs, is committed to assuring a safe environment in ministry for its children and young people that conforms to Charter requirements.

For further information regarding the Eparchial Safe Environment Program please contact:

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SAINT ANN CHURCH, HARRISBURG, PA

Parish Education Calendar 2018

Saturday February 7, 2018 from 10 AM- 3 PM: Pysanky Workshop taught by Maria Cicarelli and assisted by Keith Koshute. Fee: \$5 per family, includes materials.

Wednesday February 21, 2018 Same session given at Noon AND 6 PM followed by prayer: Parish Lenten Education session with Fr. Jim Spera "Living As Missionary Disciples" (snowdate Wednesday Feb 28)

Saturday March 3, 2018 from 11:30 AM - 3 PM: Parish Education Day on End-of-Life Issues and Ethics with Mr. Dominic Lombardi

Sunday March 25, 2018 at 9 AM: Palm Sunday & The Feast of the Annunciation Liturgy followed by Parish Brunch and Easter Egg Hunt

Saturday June 2, 2018 from 10 AM – 3 PM: Parish Education Day with Fr. Alexei Michalenko with Sr. Victoria and Sr. Mary Ann of the Community of the Mother of God of Tenderness (CMGT), "Living As Missionary Disciples"

All programs take place at St. Ann Byzantine Catholic Church, 5408 Locust Lane, Harrisburg, PA 17109. For more details on events, location, or speakers, please contact Angela Sedun at StAnnByzEvents@gmail.com or at 717-490-1284.

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

A Byzantine Catholic community is forming at Saint Philip Neri Church, 292 Munn Rd., Fort Mill, SC. Please join us as we grow our community and celebrate the Byzantine Divine Liturgy. Father Steven Galuschik of All Saints Byzantine Catholic Church in North Fort Myers, FL, celebrated liturgy at the end of October and

is working towards offering weekly Liturgical services in the area. This community will serve the northern part of South Carolina as well as Charlotte, North Carolina. Please share this information with your friends and family – especially those who have moved "down South." We will be celebrating the Byzantine Divine Liturgy on the

first three Saturdays in December. If you would like to participate in any way, or have questions please contact Ron Somich at 440.477.6389 or ron.somich@gmail.com. The website <https://carolinabyzantine.com/> will be coming soon – please check that out for news, upcoming gatherings, and service times.

Byzantine Divine Liturgy on Saturdays: January 6, 13, 20, 27 Come Join Us!

SEASONAL REFLECTIONS

Father Ronald Hatton



OUR CELEBRATION IS NOT OVER!

Christmas is past, and the world has moved on to other things, but not so the Church. We have a definite timeline that continues, for the most part, for 40 days after the Feast of the Nativity, and this month contains very important feasts.

No sooner than we celebrate the Nativity of our Lord, while the rest of the world (those who follow the Gregorian Calendar) celebrates the coming of the new year, the Church celebrates the feast of the Circumcision of our Lord, eight days after His birth. Circumcision is an important ritual in Judaism, as it makes the male child a child of the covenant between God and Abraham: "And God said to Abraham, 'As for you, you shall keep My covenant, you and your descendants after you throughout their generations. This is My covenant, which you shall keep, between Me and you and your descendants after you: Every male among you shall be circumcised. You shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskins, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and you. He that is eight days old among you shall be circumcised; every male throughout your generations, whether born in your house, or bought with your money from any foreigner who is not of your offspring.... So shall My covenant be in your flesh an everlasting covenant. Any uncircumcised male who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin shall be cut off from his people; he has broken My covenant'" (Genesis 17:9-14). On the eighth day, the child was also formally named: "And at the end of eight days, when He was circumcised, He was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before He was conceived in the womb" (Luke 2:21). We see this

also with the birth of John the Baptist: "And on the eighth day they came to circumcise the child; and they would have named him Zechariah after his father, but his mother said, 'Not so; he shall be called John.' And they said to her, 'None of your kindred is called by this name.' And they made signs to his father, inquiring what he would have him called. And he asked for a writing tablet, and wrote, 'His name is John'" (Luke 1:59-63). Both these names have great significance for us, as "John" (Gr. *Ioannes*, from the Heb. *Yochanan*) means "YHWH is Gracious," and "Jesus" (Greek *Iesous*, Aramaic, *Yeshu'a*, from the Heb. *Yehoshu'a*; Anglicized as, "Joshua") means "YHWH is Salvation." So, just as Joshua in the books of Exodus and Joshua is identified with the successor to Moses who brought the Israelites into the Promised Land, showing the fulfillment of God's promise and His grace to His people, so, too, *our* Joshua, Jesus, is the fulfillment of God's promise to be our Salvation.

January 1 is also the feast day of Saint Basil the Great (one of the Three Holy Hierarchs celebrated on January 30), Archbishop of Caesarea in Cappadocia (in present-day Turkey), and is traditionally the author of our Divine Liturgy of Saint Basil the Great, which we celebrate on this day as well as Sundays of the Great Fast and other major holy days.

In His love for the human race, the Savior condescended and willed to be wrapped in swaddling clothes. Eight days old according to His mother and eternal according to His Father, He did not look down upon the circumcision of the flesh. Therefore, O believers, let us cry out to Him: You are our God;

have mercy on us! (Vespers for the Feast).

The great feast, of course, is the Theophany of our Lord on January 6. The origin of the Feast goes back to Apostolic times, and it is mentioned in The Apostolic Constitutions (Book V:13). From the second century, we have the testimony of Saint Clement of Alexandria concerning the celebration of the Baptism of the Lord, and the night vigil before this Feast. The name itself refers to a manifestation of God. In the Western tradition, this day is devoted to the Visit of the Magi, and thus His manifestation to the Gentiles. In the East, it is devoted to Jesus' manifestation as the Son of God at His Baptism in the Jordan by John the Baptist and, further, the manifestation of the Holy Trinity (cf. Matthew 3: 13-17, Mark 1: 9-11, and Luke 3:21, 22). Thus, it is an important day for us both as an affirmation of the dogma of the Trinity and as the day when we traditionally celebrate the Great Sanctification of Water, in some parishes not only with the Blessing of Water in the parish on the eve of the Feast, but also with the blessing of a nearby body of water, usually a river, on the day of the Feast.

The True Light has appeared to bestow enlightenment upon all. The all-pure Christ is baptized with us; He sanctifies the water and it becomes a cleansing for our souls. All that which appears outward and visible is earthly, and that which is understood by the mind is greater than the heavens. Salvation is bestowed through washing, and the Spirit is received through water. By descending into the water, we ascend to God. How wonderful are Your works, O Lord; glory to You! (Matins for the Feast). ECL



SEMINARIAN REFLECTIONS

Seminarian Paul Varchola West

“I WAS YOUNG WHEN I LEFT HOME”

It's the holiday season, and all over the United States one may hear calls of "I'll be home for Christmas." This year, in particular, the idea of home has taken on a completely different context for me as my grandmother was called to eternal repose with the Lord just prior to Thanksgiving. Needless to say, right now, living far away from my home can be, at times, extremely isolating and trying, especially having a wife and two children who want to be "home" as well. In these moments, I often think of my grandmother who, in 1938, at the age of 17, left her home in eastern Slovakia to come to the United States, knowing very well that she may never go back home again. She would only go back home once, in 1972, during the Soviet Occupation. All of a sudden, the drive from Pittsburgh to New Jersey doesn't seem so far or arduous. Regardless of if one leaves home to escape the atrocities of war or for some other, more pleasant reason, the longing to be "home" is the same none the less. Why is this?

In a somewhat lesser known song written by Bob Dylan, entitled "I Was Young When I Left Home," Dylan

spins the yarn of a young man who left his home to venture out and make a life of his own. The tale begins as follows:

*I was young when I left home,
And I been out a'ramblin' 'round,
And I never wrote a letter to my home.
To my home, Lord, to my home,
And I never wrote a letter to my home.*

Very quickly, it becomes evident that the young man has fallen into a life of ill repute. His life has fallen apart, he is strapped with debt and owns nothing but the clothes on his back and his pocket watch. He soon finds out from a chance encounter with an old friend that the home that he has left has fallen apart as well and he is told "your daddy needs you home right away." All the young man can do is think:

*Well I can't go home this a'way.
This a'way, Lord, Lord, Lord,
I can't go home this a'way.*

This man is clearly completely lost. But rather than making some type of reconciliation with the life he has led, he instead tries to run which, let's face it, is sometimes the easiest option one may think up. The young man begs:

*I used to tell my Maw sometimes,
When I see them ridin' blind,
Gonna make me a home out in the wind.
In the wind, Lord, in the wind,
Make me a home out in the wind.*

Immediately he relents, and cries out in a final moment of desperation:

*I don't like it in the wind,
I want to go back home again,
But I can't go home this a'way.
This a'way, Lord, Lord, Lord,
And I can't go home this a'way.*

Dylan's young man is, as I see it, every single one of us. We, as humans, are born into this world completely unprepared for existence on this earth; however, we are faced with the fact that we must make it work while we are here. While circumstance may have cause for us to miss our earthly "home", each and every one of us is only really attempting to make a home out in the wind until we are ultimately called home to the Lord. When the time comes and our Heavenly Father says He needs us to return home right away, how many of us will say, "But I can't go home this a'way?" How many of us will have been so distracted by the blinders of trying to make our existence out in the wind that we will

have forgotten to send a letter home and be overcome by shame from our lack of loving contact with our home?

This was the problem that Dylan's young man faced. He never wrote home. Not once. We need to stay in touch with our home, both in the world and in our home to come. Our prayers are our letters to our heavenly and eternal home. Regardless of how lost or lonely one may feel in this life, God, our Father, would never mind hearing from us. Furthermore, losing a loved one at any time, especially around the holidays, is never easy. Remember, our prayers are our letters home. As we approach the joy and business of the Christmas season, let us not forget to reach out to those who have been called home before us through prayer. Share with them, and with God, the joys, struggles, and sorrows of this life as we try to make our way back home. Staying in spiritual contact with those who can guide us is but one way to ease the burden of longing to be home. I have come to realize that this is how my grandmother sustained herself through all those years of being so far away from home and family. She always wrote letters home. She always prayed. If we stay in touch with our heavenly home, sending our prayerful letters and asking for help when we need it most, when the time comes to go home we can most certainly say with confidence, "This a'way. Lord, Lord, Lord. I CAN go home this a'way!"

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WHEN TRAVELING TO THE SOUTH THIS WINTER PLEASE VISIT OUR CHURCHES

All Saints
10291 Bayshore Road
North Fort Meyers, FL 33917
1-239-543-6363

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

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

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

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

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

Our Lady of the Sign
7311 Lyons Road

Coconut Creek, FL 33073
1-954-429-0056

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

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

UPCOMING EPARCHIAL AND PARISH EVENTS

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JANUARY

- 1 Circumcision of Our Lord
Our Holy Father Basil the Great
Solemn Holy Day Chancery closed
Happy New Year!*
- 6 Holy Theophany of Our Lord
Holy Day of Obligation
- 7 Sunday after Theophany
- 14 Sunday of Zacchaeus
- 18-19 March for Life
Washington, DC
- 21 Sunday of the Publican and the Pharisee
First Pre-Lenten Sunday
- 28 Sunday of the Prodigal Son
Second Pre-Lenten Sunday
- 30 Three Holy Hierarchs
Simple Holy Day

JULY

- 5-8 Byzantine Youth Rally
Saint Vincent College, Latrobe, PA

AUGUST

- 4-8 Altar Server Camp
Carpathian Village, Canadensis, PA