



EASTERN CATHOLIC LIFE

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THEOSIS IN ACTION

Bringing the New Evangelization to Byzantine Catholic Young Adults with Internet/Social Media Platform

by Father Vasyl Chepelskyy with Christopher Russo, Adriana Shubeck, Deacon Stephen Russo, and Deacon Thomas Shubeck



Father Vasyl Chepelskyy, Mr. Christopher Russo, Deacon Stephen Russo, Bishop Kurt, Adriana Shubeck, and Deacon Thomas Shubeck

Bishop Kurt enthusiastically gave his blessing and support to *Theosis In Action*, the Young Adult Ministry of the Eparchy of Passaic on January 27, 2018. *Theosis In Action* is a response to the grim reality that more than half of all US Catholics leave the Church at some point in their lives, with most of them never to return. This new ministry's mission is to "serve Byzantine Catholic young adults (ages 18-35) from the Eparchy of Passaic and beyond as well as inquirers of good will by providing them with resources to grow in their faith and opportunities for fellowship as they navigate through adulthood. Through the use of social media and in-person events, *Theosis In Action* seeks to equip young adults to be the light of Christ in a secular world."

The inspiration for this new initiative grew out of last summer's Convocation of Catholic Leaders in Orlando, FL, where people from throughout the United States gathered to take a close look at challenges, concerns, and opportunities in light of the Church's mission of evangelization. The Convocation looked at how to form leaders who are equipped and energized to share the Gospel as missionary disciples.

It specifically addressed ways in which the internet and social media offer means for evangelizing. The Convocation prompted conversations among several of the attendees from Passaic: Father Gary Mensinger, Father Vasyl Chepelskyy, and Deacon Stephen Russo. This led to their having video conferences together with Deacon Thomas Shubeck, Christopher Russo, and Adriana Shubeck. After more than two months of weekly meetings, the working group met with Bishop Kurt on January 27 in Woodland Park, NJ. Mr. Russo and Ms. Shubeck presented the group's proposal to the bishop, and *Theosis In Action* was born.

Theosis In Action is the place where Byzantine Catholic young adults can come together as one community to learn about our faith, socialize, invite speakers to present topics of interest, share spiritual experiences, support one another, exchange ideas, ask questions, offer suggestions, and just keep in touch and have fun. Though a dedicated team of clergy and lay young adults will coordinate this ministry, Bishop Kurt's vision is that *Theosis In Action* will be "driven by young adults."

Visitors to the platform will be able to find inspirational quotes and stories, regular homily reflections, opportunities to ask questions and discuss various topics, live presentations, spiritual recollections as well as interviews with theologians, and more. *Theosis In Action* will also provide opportunities for young adults to gather at various locations throughout the Eparchy for fellowship, learning, cultural offerings, and spiritual growth. A Convocation for Young Adults is in the early planning stages for 2019, and *Theosis In Action* will have a presence at the 2018 Youth Rally at Saint Vincent College in

Latrobe, PA, this summer and at the Annual Pilgrimage to Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Mount Saint Macrina, Uniontown, PA

If you are a young adult, check out the *Theosis In Action* Facebook page www.facebook.com/theosisinaction and upcoming website to learn more about this exciting new ministry. If you do not already know what theosis means, you can learn on our Facebook page and future website. Message us on Facebook, or email us at crrusso513@gmail.com or amshubeck@gmail.com with your questions and suggestions. We are here for you!



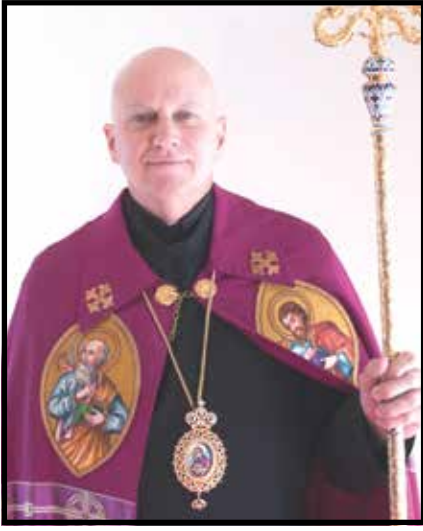
Christ the Bridegroom

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I LIFT UP MY EYES...

Pastoral Reflections of Bishop Kurt



THE WISDOM OF GOD AND THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS

Anyone who lives long enough will experience great pain and disappointment. Some two thousand years ago, Cicero found his life unbearable. After a painful divorce, he owed a large amount of money to repay the dowry to his wife's wealthy family. A second marriage to a young lady failed, and then his daughter Tullia died. On the death of his daughter, Cicero wrote to a friend, "I have lost the one thing that bound me to life." As we might say nowadays, he had no reason to live. Cicero moved to the countryside to try to make sense of life, and while there he wrote a remarkable reflection on life in which four friends, Lucullus, Catullus, Hortensius, and Cicero himself argue about the purpose of life. In the course of the conversation at the house of Lucullus, the friends discuss the best way to spend time in order to find happiness. The conversation begins when Catullus admires the beauty of Lucullus' house. Hortensius, perhaps because he had been drinking, says that he has greater admiration for the skill of those who designed it. From there they take turns arguing about the best way to spend one's time. Hortensius praises the visual art, Catullus praises literature and poetry, Lucullus recommends attending lectures and studying history. Catullus finally points out the value of philosophy, and then Cicero gives a speech proving that the highest way to spend free time is on philosophy, that is, the study of wisdom. In his speech, Cicero recommends not just the study of one sect or school of wisdom, but to "love and seek and hold fast and strongly embrace wisdom itself, wherever it may be found."

This little book by Cicero was wildly popular for the next few centuries and read by pagans then Christians, but it hasn't survived to our day. We only know it from quotations by other authors. In particular, when the great bishop Saint Augustine of North Africa was still a pagan at the age of nineteen, he went to Carthage to study, and he says that this book changed his life. The young man made a decision to search out all schools of wisdom, and after trying out different popular teachings of his time, it finally led him to find Jesus Christ, the true wisdom made flesh. In writing about Cicero's book, Saint Augustine says, "The book changed my feelings. It altered my prayers, O Lord, to be towards Yourself. It gave me different values and priorities." In our tradition, we call Jesus Christ "Hagia Sophia," the Holy Wisdom, because He is Wisdom made flesh.

According to some writers, it was this book by Cicero that popularized the teaching of Aristotle that, "All men desire to be happy." Happiness is the goal that all of us strive towards. No one sets out to be unhappy, but we make decisions at each moment based on what we believe will make us happy, sometimes in the short term and sometimes for the long term. When we are starting out in life, our passions move us to choose im-

mediate pleasure as the road to happiness. With experience, we learn that choosing immediate pleasure often leads to unhappiness farther along. The ancients then agreed that everyone desires happiness, but that there are many different ideas on what it is or how to achieve it.

As Christians, we have the wisdom of over 3000 years of revelations by our Maker. God desires our happiness, and He knows best how we can achieve it because He made us. In our Bible, there is an entire book called the Book of Wisdom that talks about the "big picture" of happiness. It begins by warning that wisdom will not enter into the hearts of the deceitful, and says that the spirit of wisdom is a loving spirit. It goes on to talk about those who see only the present world—they do not know about the afterlife, so they pursue immediate pleasure in this life, and take all they can get without considering the cost to the poor or the defenseless or the elderly. Those who do not know the true God seek wealth or power or fame or glory as their goals. You need only read the biographies of the ancients to see what misery they called great. Men such as Caesar and Alexander and Hannibal and many others killed and tortured countless others in the pursuit of worldly glory and fame. For example, more than one hundred thousand were killed in the battles of Hannibal, but when he had the chance to actually capture Rome after wiping out two consular armies at the battle of Cannae, he didn't do it. Ruling Rome was never his goal—his goal was fame from military victories and the cruel victories had no purpose except his fame. But the Book of Wisdom says that, "God created man to be immortal, and made him to be an image of his own eternity. Nevertheless through envy of the devil death came into the world." The Book of Wisdom says that we should place our hope in the afterlife, for "the souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and there shall no torment touch them. In the sight of the unwise they seemed to die: and their departure is taken for misery, ... but they are at peace. For though they be punished in the sight of men yet is their hope full of immortality."

With a different perspective, a different point of view, the pursuit of happiness (enshrined in our Declaration of Independence) takes on a new meaning for Christians. Not only do we pursue virtues that preserve us from the temporary misery of this life, but we seek the virtues that unite us with Almighty God, and we look to His wisdom to guide us in our pursuit of happiness.

In searching the scriptures to find the path to happiness, we find a verse at the very beginning that describes our own creation. In the second chapter of Genesis, after making Adam, God says, "It is not good for the man to be alone." So God makes animals to keep Adam company. It brings Adam some temporary relief from his loneliness, but they are not a complete answer. So then God makes Eve so that Adam can have a friend who is not a lower animal, but his equal. In this passage, we find one of the keys to happiness, that we are not made to be happy in isolation. People who indulge their weaknesses constantly will talk

about the intense loneliness that they feel. I have even heard these people say, "I was always lonely, even when I was around other people." That loneliness is present with other people, because someone who is a slave to the passions always sees other people as tools or obstacles, and so he can never take real pleasure in the company of others. We can only enjoy the company of others, one of life's supreme pleasures, when we see them as equals to be respected as also created in the image and likeness of God. When we see them with respect, as God sees them, it is impossible to see them as tools or obstacles.

In our tradition, we have a great emphasis on subduing the passions. No Christian teacher will tell you to eliminate the passions. The passions are part of our nature given to us by our all wise Creator, and they all have good purposes. But due to the selfishness that we inherited from the sin of Adam, our passions have become unruly. There is a story from ancient Greece that someone asked an old man what it was like to be free of the lust of youth, and he replied that he felt as though he was tied on a wild horse, and someone finally told him he could get off the horse. Oscar Wilde said, the only way to get rid of temptation is to yield to it, but we know from experience that the opposite is true. Giving in to temptation leads to more temptation. The more we lose our tempers, the more freely we become angry. No one ever stopped smoking by smoking one more cigarette. If we steal something, it becomes easier to steal again. As they say in Narcotics Anonymous, "One is too many and a thousand is not enough." Oscar Wilde enjoyed saying outrageous things, and he was probably making a joke. In fact, he became a Catholic at the end of his life. When he met Pope Pius IX, the Holy Father said to him, "I hope that you may take a journey in life in order to arrive at the city of God." These were prophetic words. Wilde had said, "Catholicism is the only religion to die in." When he became Catholic at the end of his life he said, "the Catholic Church is for saints and sinners alone—for respectable people, the Anglican Church will do..."

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus said, "When you fast..." Jesus did not say, "If you fast..." Jesus speaks clearly to his followers that they will fast. In another passage, the Pharisees ask why the followers of Jesus do not fast. Jesus replies, "How can the guests of the bridegroom fast while he is with them? They cannot so long as they have him with them. But the time will come when the bridegroom will be taken from them, and on that day they will fast." So Our Lord says clearly that His followers will fast. Why do we fast? We fast to subdue the passions. By disciplining one of our most basic urges, the urge to eat, we train ourselves to deny our other passions. And indeed our many prayers during Lent encourage us persistently to subdue all of our sinful passions. We are encouraged to keep our tempers, to be patient, to be guarded in our speech, to avoid judging others, to avoid criticizing others, to avoid placing ourselves before others. We are encouraged to be generous: to be generous in our thoughts about others, to be generous in our words to others, to be generous in the time we give to others, and to

be generous with our hearts. Charles Dickens, after poking fun at Americans in one of his Christmas stories, said that, "Whatever little motes my beamy eyes may have descried in theirs, they belong to a kind, generous, large-hearted, and great people." What a goal to strive for in Lent! To live up to these words of Dickens, to be "kind, generous, large-hearted, and great"!

So Aristotle said that all men desire to be happy, and Great Lent is truly the pursuit of happiness. We know from the wisdom revealed to us by our Maker that happiness does not lie in selfishness, isolation, and solipsism. We know that

happiness is found in reaching out, especially to God in prayer, and to our fellows also made in the image of God. We know that our unruly passions make us selfish and self centered, not to mention that they make us hurt other people after we hurt ourselves. So God has given us the tool of fasting and the great season of Lent to pursue happiness, to become what Dickens said about Americans, "kind, generous, large-hearted, and great." God made us to be happy, and to be eternally happy.

+Kurt Burnette

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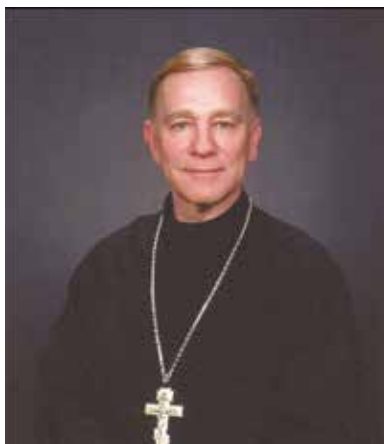
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+FATHER CHARLES YASTISHOCK FALLS ASLEEP IN THE LORD

As this issue went to press, we learned of the sudden passing of Father Charles Yastishock, a priest of the Eparchy of Passaic and pastor of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish in Toms River, NJ. There will be more coverage of this sad event in an upcoming issue.



DIRECTIVES FOR THE GREAT FAST

From the Office of the Bishop

The tradition of our Church is to eat no meat after Meatfare Sunday until Easter, and the tradition of our Church is to eat no dairy products after Cheesefare Sunday until Easter. The regulations here are the minimum required by our Church authorities, but everyone is encouraged to follow our tradition, except for children and women who are pregnant or nursing. The reason to have an Easter basket is to eat the foods denied during Great Lent.

FASTING REGULATIONS

- +All who receive Communion in the Eparchy of Passaic are required to abstain from meat on Wednesdays and Fridays of the Great Fast.
- +All adults who receive Communion in the Eparchy of Passaic are required to abstain from meat, eggs, and milk products on the first day of Lent, Monday, February 12, and on Great and Holy Friday, March 30.
- +These are the minimum requirements; however, the faithful are encouraged to do more.

Dispensation

+Pastors and Administrators may, for a just cause, grant to the individual faithful and to individual families, dispensations or commutations of the fasting rules into other pious practices.

LITURGICAL DIRECTIVES

- Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts
- +All Pastors and Administrators are encouraged to celebrate the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts on Wednesdays and Fridays of the Great Fast.
- +A liturgical service at which Holy Communion is distributed may be celebrated on the other weekdays of the Great Fast.

We ask you to pray for peace throughout the world, and for the victims of war. Please remember in your prayers all those in the military who are serving our country throughout the world.

LENTEN VESPERS SCHEDULE

Wyoming Valley Protopresbyterate

Sun., March 4, 2018..... Saint Mary, Wilkes-Barre

Sun., March 11, 2018 Saint Nicholas, Swoyersville

Sun., March 18, 2018 Saint Mary, Kingston

Susquehanna Valley Protopresbyterate

Sun., March 4, 2018..... Saint Michael, Dunmore

Sun., March 11, 2018 Saint Mary, Taylor

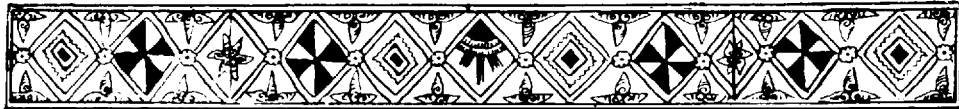
Parishes in Montgomery and Chester Counties

Sun., March 4, 2018..... Saints Peter and Paul Ukrainian Catholic Church, Phoenixville

Sun., March 11, 2018 Saint Michael Ukrainian, Stowe

Sun., March 18, 2018 Saint Michael, Mont Clare

Each Vespers will start at 3 PM and there will be light Lenten refreshments provided by the host parishes following.



PEOPLE YOU KNOW

IN ANNANDALE...

Frozen pipe damage from cold weather

The first of the events happened the first week in January when the suppression system sprinkler pipes burst in five places. The sprinklers are located in a storage room on the upper level of the parish hall but the water traveled out in to the parish hall and down through the ceiling to the SOR classrooms which are occupied during the week by a day care. The day care was closed for two days while the service company followed demoli-

tion and abatement procedures.

The second incident occurred the next week. This time a water pipe in the ceiling of the kitchen burst. The kitchen ceiling collapsed sending water into the kitchen and the open area of the day care area on the lower floor. The water fell into the boiler room corroding seven breaker fuses in the panel.



Wet insulation is taken down



Damage above the kitchen sink

IN BEAVER MEADOWS...

ECF teachers honored for years of service

Three long-time Eastern Christian Formation (ECF) teachers at Saints Peter and Paul Byzantine Catholic Church in Beaver Meadows, PA, retired from the parish ECF program. Combined, they have over 125 years of service to the church. Their students, fellow teachers, and pastor, Father James Demko, honored them with a reception after a recent ECF class. Pictured, left to right, are Rita Baran, Mary Catherine Pituch, and Claire Lorince.



IN MAHWAH...

Holy Spirit Church in Mahwah, NJ, was pleased to welcome the Saint Monica Homeschool Group from the Middletown, NY, area on Sunday, January 28. Parents and children attended the Divine Liturgy; joined the parishioners for fellowship; and then returned to the church for a lively learning session led by Father Jack Custer, administrator of the parish. Each participant received an icon and a prayer rope as a parting gift. Parishioners, Meghan and Steven Merschen, coordinated the event.



Father Jack and altar server Patrick Maney demonstrate the use of incense.



A biblical treasure hunt led the children to find elements from the Jerusalem Temple in a Byzantine Church (with some help from Hebrews 9)

IN PASSAIC...

The Holy Name Society of Saint Michael Cathedral marked Meatfare Sunday with a beefsteak dinner on Saturday, February 3, for a full house of parishioners and guests. Some of the youngest members of the parish served as waitstaff.

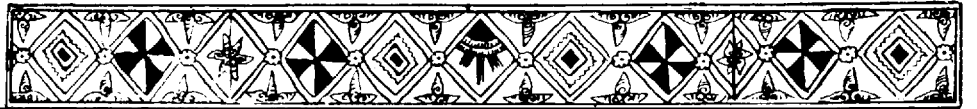


Waitstaff with Father Jack Custer



Head chef Mark Hrehovcik with other kitchen crew

AROUND THE EPARCHY



IN SMITHTOWN...

Church of the Resurrection parishioners held their annual pre-Lenten "Italian Carnival" Sunday afternoon, to benefit restoration of the rectory. Chairpersons Jo and Joe Andrews coordinated the preparation of their treasured family recipes. The spaghetti and meatball dinner included entertainment, traditional desserts and a mozzarella making demonstration. Resurrection Parish is served by Father Tyler Strand.



IN WILKES-BARRE TOWNSHIP...

The entire parish family of Saint John the Baptist Church in Wilkes-Barre Township, PA, would like to extend its congratulations to their cantor, Mr. George Daru, upon his reception of the Order of Bishop Andrej Bachinskij, 1st Class, from Bishop Milan Šašik of the Greek Catholic Eparchy of Mukachevo, Zakarpattia Oblast, Ukraine.

This award was presented to him during the annual parish Christmas party on Sunday, January 7, for his work in raising funds for the seminary and the Eparchy of Mukachevo through the sale of his personal collection of books and other collectibles. During the past seven years, Cantor Daru was able to send \$35,000 to the Eparchy of Mukachevo.

Cantor Daru said he was inspired to work on this project because of his appreciation of Bishop Šašik sending so many priests to help Byzantine Catholic churches in the U.S., especially the Eparchy of Passaic. He thanked everyone who helped him with this project, especially Father Mykhaylo Prodanets, Administrator of Saint John Parish, and the first priest sent from Ukraine to the Eparchy of Passaic.

Cantor Daru was previously honored by Bishop Šašik with the Order of Bishop Theodore Romzha 3rd and 2nd class. The party was sponsored by Saint John's Guild. All had a wonderful time.



FRANCISCAN FRIARS OF THE RENEWAL LENTEN EVENING OF RECOLLECTION FOR TEENS AND YOUNG ADULTS

AT ST THOMAS THE APOSTLE, RAHWAY, ON FRIDAY EVENING, MARCH 2

Saint Thomas the Apostle Church in Rahway will have as its guests Franciscan Friars of the Renewal who will present a Lenten Evening of Reflection, the centerpiece of which will be the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts. The Friars' presentations direct their words to teens and young adults who should bring hearty appetites, as their bodies, minds, and souls will be fed. The evening will begin at 6:15 PM and conclude by 9:30 PM.

To better plan for a simple Lenten supper, please RSVP to Deacon Tom by Monday, February 26, to frdeacontom@gmail.com.

For those not familiar with the Franciscan Friars of the Renewal, see their website www.franciscanfriars.com.

PEOPLE YOU KNOW AROUND THE EPARCHY

IN WILLIAMSBURG...

Bishop Kurt Surprises Ascension Parish, Williamsburg, VA

After participating in the January, 2018 Right to Life events in Washington, D.C., Bishop Kurt boarded Amtrak and traveled to Williamsburg, VA, to visit Ascension of Our Lord Parish. The entire parish family was thrilled by his surprise visit and inspired by his most informative and, at times, humorous sermon.

The Williamsburg visit was filled with events previously scheduled. Bishop Kurt blessed new vestments and, after Liturgy, he had an opportunity to visit with the parish members individually and gave the sick his blessing and prayed over them.



Bishop Kurt and Father Alex with the Ascension Choir: (left to right) Ludmilla Rich, Diana Mytulynska, Donald Merkley, Dr. Mary Jean Sotack, Oksanna Mytulynska, Delores Clinton (Choir Director Lisa Cifulak Edwards not pictured)



"Now You Shall Dismiss Your Servant, O Lord," sings Bishop Kurt as he returns the baby to his parents Adi and Sasha Kusno



Fr. Alex Shuter reads the Gospel, Altar servers: Left to right Kevin Kelly, and Matthew Montgomery

Bishop Kurt bestowed the Rite of Initiation during Liturgy to the newest member of Ascension, Abraham Darmadi Kusno, as the choir sang the responses. The entire community was able to visit with the Bishop during the baptism reception organized by the Ascension Outreach Committee. At the conclusion of his visit, Bishop Kurt also met with all the committee leaders for a brief explanation of their duties within the parish. He spoke highly of how Father Alex Shuter organized the parish, and was particularly impressed by the beauty of the icons written by Ascension's own iconographer, Donald Merkley. The bishop was surprised and pleased to learn that once a month the Children's Choir leads the Liturgy as cantors and lectors.

IN BELTSVILLE...

A Traditional Betrothal Takes Place

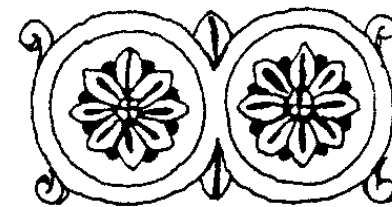


Kyle Anderson and Shelby Macy are being blessed with their Betrothal Bands by Father Lewis Rabayda, Parochial Vicar



The newly betrothed Kyle Anderson and Shelby Macy

The first event in the Rite of Crowning in Marriage is the Betrothal. This is the part of the ritual in which the man and woman exchange rings like they normally would in an engagement. However, the rings are blessed by a priest and given to them in the Church within a liturgical rite. These rings are a symbol of their bond of peace and oneness of mind. At one time, the Betrothal happened separately from the Crowning, which is what this couple desired to do. On Saturday, February 10th, Kyle Anderson and Shelby Macy were betrothed to one another in solemn anticipation of their Crowning in Marriage. May God grant to His newly Betrothed servants, peace, health, and happiness for many blessed years!



SAINT ANN BYZANTINE CATHOLIC CHURCH
Harrisburg, PA

Parish Education Calendar:
Spring 2018

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.

ByzanTEEN
Youth Rally 2018
July 5-8, 2018
"Who is My Neighbor?"
St. Vincent College
Latrobe, PA
www.byzanteen.com



SAINT MARY CHURCH IN JERSEY CITY CELEBRATES 100TH ANNIVERSARY

A Joyous Day, October 15th, 2017

The joyous day, October 15, 2017, began with a celebration of a Hierarchical Divine Liturgy of Thanksgiving by Bishop Kurt. The bishop was greeted with the traditional signs of Slavic hospitality, bread and salt, by Veronika Vira and Ema and Leah Purtell. Concelebrating with Bishop Kurt were Father Jack Custer, Syncellus of New Jersey, Rector of the Cathedral of Saint Michael, Passaic, and parish vocation; Father Marcel Szabo, Administrator of Saint Mary Church; and Father Edward Semko, pastor emeritus of Saint Elias Church, Carteret, NJ, and former pastor. Assisting in the Liturgy were Deacon Robert Behrens, Holy Ghost Church, Jessup, PA, and Deacon Timothy Kennedy. Altar Servers were Kyle Devitt and Adam Kmeck, grandson of the late Cantor George Kmeck. Master of Ceremonies was

Father Edward Higgins, Pastor of Holy Ghost Church, Philadelphia, PA, and parish vocation. The liturgy responses were sung by the congregation and Saint Mary Choir under the direction of John Klapko.

After the Liturgy, friends, parishioners and former parishioners, some who travelled from as far as NC, MA, NH, and PA, gathered together to enjoy dinner and an afternoon reminiscing with old friends. Serving as Master of Ceremonies for the banquet was Grant Purtell. Veronika Vira and Leah Purtell gave the history of the 100 years of Saint Mary Parish. At the close of the evening, Saint Mary Choir invited past members to join them in singing "The Bells of Saint Mary's."



Parish youth offer the traditional gifts of Slavic hospitality to Bishop Kurt



Father Marcel Szabo with parishioners



Veronika Vira and Ema and Leah Purtell



Bishop Kurt blesses with the trikerion and dikerion



Grant Purtell as Master of Ceremonies



THE SYNOD ON YOUTH CONTINUES

by Christopher T. Russo

through the 24th of March. Three hundred youth and young adult representatives from around the world will gather to participate in the discussion.

With the blessing of Archbishop William Skurla, I am honored to represent the Byzantine Catholic Church as a delegate from the United States for the duration of the pre-synod. The Church hopes to grow closer to young people through these discussions, and gain insight to their concerns and aspirations with the assurance that their words will serve as a vital contribution to the October Synod.

While there will be a variety of topics discussed, this pre-synod meeting seeks to address three major points and pose the following questions:

1.) *Identifying challenges and opportunities of young people in today's world.*

With young people building the foundation for the future, how can the Church cultivate their ambitions in the face of their uncertainties and questions about tomorrow?

2.) *Accompaniment through faith and vocational discernment.*

Christ calls all people to something greater than themselves. In the journey of faith, what drives young people to say, "I believe"? How can the church better accompany these individuals in how they look beyond themselves to recognize Christ throughout their lives?

3.) *The Church's formative and pastoral involvement with young people.*

The Church urges young people to become true witnesses in proclaiming Christ to the world. How can the Church better engage and aid young leaders within their communities and beyond?

With these questions in mind, I humbly ask for the help and input of all of our young people, clergy, and communities throughout the Byzantine Catholic Metropolia. During the pre-synod, the Vatican encourages the youth to become involved by writing and sharing their thoughts through the official website (www.synod2018.va), social media platforms, and by using the hashtag #Synod2018.

This year, Pope Francis called the bishops of the Catholic Church to convene in the discussion of "Young People, The Faith, and Vocational Discernment" in the upcoming synod. During this synod, the Church will focus its attention on how to better accompany and guide young people through the various challenges and joys of life. Pope Francis asked to hear the voices of young people throughout the world during an unprecedented "pre-synod" in preparation, which will be held in Rome from the 19th



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

For more information, please contact

Fr. Ed Cimbala at 908-872-2928

fredcimbala@gmail.com

Susan Prendergast

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Danube River Cruise – Join Fr. Ed Cimbala for a 14 day river cruise and land adventure to Germany, Austria, Slovakia, Hungary, and Poland - October 31 to November 13, 2018. For more information, please contact Fr. Ed Cimbala at 908-872-2928 or fredcimbala@gmail.com. You can contact the travel agency direct by calling Susan Prendergast at Select International Tours, 800-842-4842, susan@select-intl.com. For a complete presentation of the trip and an online brochure visit the Trip Web-page at <http://www.olphbyz.com/Pg/DanubeCruise.html>.

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 July. 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.archpitt.org/classes>

ASK A PRIEST A QUESTION

Father Vasyl Chepelskyy



DO WE STILL ADHERE TO THE CONCEPT OF MORTAL AND VENIAL SINS?

Father Vasyl,

When my generation was growing up, we were taught about mortal and venial sins. Does the Byzantine Catholic Church today still go by the concept of mortal and venial sins? If on a day when there is a "fish" on the church calendar, if one eats meat on that day or doesn't substitute an "equivalent penance", does that person have a mortal sin?

Thank you for your answer, Mike.

Taking a closer look on what sin is and what are the conditions on which the gravity of it depends will help us in search for the answers to these questions, as well as it will help us to properly morally evaluate any other act and determine whether it is sinful or not, and if sinful – if it is mortal or venial sin, since there situations in which the same act could be a mortal sin in one case and venial in the other.

We know, that every sin – no matter whether big or small – is an offense against God. Every sin makes a distance between us and God and separates us from Him. As in the past, today the Church continues to differentiate between mortal and venial sins. The Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC) is teaching us that "sins are rightly evaluated according to their gravity. The distinction between mortal and venial sin, already evident in Scripture, became part of the Tradition of the Church" (cf. CCC, # 1854).

The moral quality of our actions derives from three different sources, each so closely connected with each other that, unless all three are simultaneously good, the action performed is morally bad.

1. The *object* of the act must be good. We should note that the object is not only the physical make up of an action, like taking what belongs to someone else, but taking it with (or without) his permission. Only in the second case is there any question of theft.

2. Along with what I do are the *attending circumstances*, of my action, which may change or completely alter its moral tone. Circumstances can make an otherwise good action evil, as when a man deliberately goes to sleep while on night

watchman duty. Sleep by itself is morally indifferent, but taken at a time when a person has contracted to keep awake, it becomes morally objectionable, or they can aggravate guilt, as when a child strikes his mother; or minimize guilt, as a sudden burst of anger under violent provocation; or multiply guilt, as when money is stolen from a person to whom I owe a special debt of gratitude, etc.

3. The *end or purpose*, beyond the act itself and its circumstances, also affects the moral situation. If the motive is sinful, the whole action is vitiated. Thus, for a gangster to give money to charity in order to divert attention from his crime is doing wrong even though (incidentally) people may profit from his philanthropy.

The *intention* element is of a great importance in Christianity. Some actions are always wrong, while others may be good or bad, depending on why we do them. Although it is morally wrong to kill another person, we may defend ourselves against an unjust aggressor and legitimate self-defense is not forbidden. Many other things we do, like walking, speaking, driving or reading, may be directed to good or evil ends, and they become good or evil according to the purpose intended – even though the immediate work performed is morally colorless.

The two foci around which imputability revolves are *knowledge* and *freedom*; when both faculties are fully operative, the responsibility is complete, but when either is somehow inhibited, the resulted imputability is lessened. Thus, ignorance, emotion or passion, fear, past habits, and external violence inhibit the activity of the mind and free will, and, therefore, limit human guilt, or (on occasion), may remove it altogether.

If the mind is in doubt, we must either refrain from taking action or resolve the doubt, we cannot act in doubt.

Subjectively, a person is guilty of mortal sin when he fully consents with his will to do what he realizes is a serious offense against God. Otherwise, although the matter is grave, if only partial consent was given, then only venial sin was committed. But the object of this consent is what God, not man, determines is gravely wrong. Con-

sequently, a venial sin is committed either when the matter (misdeed) is not objectively serious, and the circumstances do not make it serious; or when the matter is serious but full consent is not given by the free will.

So, for a mortal sin three conditions must together be met: object is *grave matter*, and the act is committed with *full knowledge* and *deliberate consent* (cf. CCC, # 1857).

Moreover, we have responsibility for the sins committed by others when we cooperate in them by:

- Participating directly and voluntary in them
- Ordering, advising, praising, or approving them
- Not disclosing or not hindering them when we have an obligation to do so
- By protecting evil-doers (cf. CCC, 1868).

As for the second question, a few things have to be considered: are we talking about strict fast or simple fast and abstinence? What are the health conditions and the age of the person? What are the person's intentions, reasons of doing so, frequency and surrounding circumstances?

The answers to these questions will affect and determine the gravity of the situation and person's moral responsibility.

Please note that a parish priest, for a just cause, may grant to individuals and families a dispensation or commutation of the prescribed strict or simple fasts to another equivalent penance.

The answer to this question is mainly based on and taken from: John A. Hardon, SJ, *The Catholic Catechism, A Contemporary Catechism of the Teachings of the Catholic Church*, pp. 283-294. **ECL**

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!

LENTEN DAY OF RENWAL

Hosted by the Cathedral Parish of St Michael the Archangel

SATURDAY, MARCH 17, 2018

Schedule:

9:30am: Akathist Hymn

10:30am: First Conference

12 noon: Lenten Luncheon

1:15pm: Second Conference

Opportunity for the Sacrament of Repentance

3:00pm Vespers

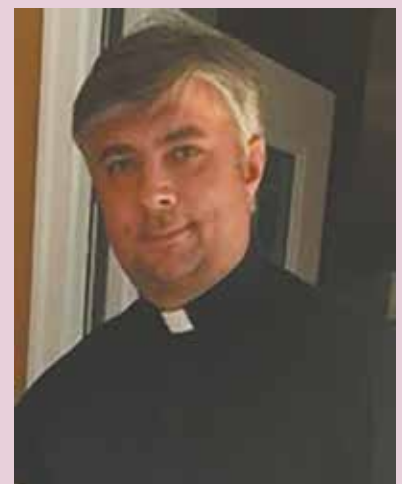
GUEST PRESENTER:

Father Eugene Khomyn, OSBM,

Hegumen of the Monastery of

Saint Josaphat, Glen Cove,

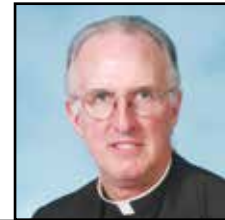
Long Island



RSVP to 973-777-2553 by Wednesday, March 14.

CATECHETICAL REFLECTIONS

Father Robert F. Slesinski, Ph.D.



MAN BEFORE GOD

Being in its Unfolding: The Primacy of Being in Unity—Installment 2/9

An intrinsic moment of all our thinking is the acknowledgment of the idea of “being”—that which is as it really is—the very condition of the possibility of our conscious activity. The idea of being is thus co-affirmed whenever something is either affirmed or even negated; it remains in the penumbra of our direct knowing. Put otherwise, we can only affirm or negate states of fact in the horizon or perspective of being. The direct task of philosophy, unlike the empirical sciences that deal with concrete objects, is to probe and elaborate upon the truths embedded in the idea of being, the be-ing, the “to be” (verbal perspective) of “being” (substantial perspective), to make explicit all that is implicit in the idea of being.

As we have already seen, the notion itself of existence deals with the “is-ness” of being. But apart from acknowledging existence, we want to know *what* or *how* a being is what it is. The “what-ness” of being concerns its *essence*—that by which a thing is that which it is, in other words, the *content* of the idea of being, the defining *nature* of an existent. Thus, the primal notions of existence and essence go hand in hand with one another in unpacking the significance of the real before us, the making known to an inquiring or knowing mind. Summarily expressed, being as “that which is” is distilled in the following way:

“that” (the essence at stake) “which” (in relation to) “is” (is-ness, to be, existence).

Having thus acknowledged that the notion of being as being marked by existence (“is-ness”) and essence (“what-ness”), other properties of be-ing come to the fore, properties that are so *at one* with being that we can even say they are “convertible” with being, namely, they express being under another formality implied by the essence of being. As such they are said to be “transcendental” properties of being as they enjoy an absolutely unlimited extension; they mark all being in general and all beings in particular. For starters, we can grasp how all beings enjoy an internal consistency of being; being is “being one” with itself and not being other than itself. Being, in other words, necessarily excludes its negation; it is *undivided* (one) in itself. Being, in other words, enjoys self-identity.

Curiously, however, in the very affirmation of the self-identity of being, we also affirm along with the one there is the “many,” the undivided in itself being divided from others. In the very act of affirmation, we have at least a subject and an object (thus, a “many”). Accordingly, we can assert there is a multitude of “ones,” this multitude in itself not being absolute, but a “unity” of beings in being. Every being as “being one” is identical with itself, but insofar as everything is, even in its

division from others, everything is *united* with everything else *in being*.

At this juncture, we are in the position to formulate the first principle of speculative reason, the principle of identity/noncontradiction. What the principle of identity states positively is more than a mere tautology or analytic statement “A=A,” but a true synthetic insight “A necessarily=A,” affirming the necessity of every being being itself. If expressed negatively, we have the principle of noncontradiction: “A being cannot not be itself.” More expansively, “something cannot at the same time and under the same respect be and not be.” A simpler statement of each is that, on the one hand, “being necessarily is being,” and, on the other, “being cannot not be.”

Contingent being, of course, enjoys only a relative unity in itself as it is a composite of being (existence) and essence. Absolute Unity requires the identification of essence with existence, an *ipsum esse*, Existence itself, which Almighty God is. The metaphysics of the Book of Exodus states exactly this. To Moses’ question “if they [the Israelites] ask me, ‘What is his name?’ what am I to tell them?” (Ex 3:13) God declaratively responds “I am who am,” adding that “this is what you shall tell the Israelites: I AM sent me to you” (Ex 3:14), Almighty God being absolutely at One with Himself. **ECL**



LIFE, LOVE, AND THE HUMAN PERSON

By Ann M. Koshute, MTS

TASTE YOUR WORDS

They say that “God moves in mysterious ways,” and that sentiment should resonate with Eastern Christians. We use the term *Holy Mysteries* to describe the Sacraments – not to be contrary to the West or imply that we have “secret knowledge.” In theological terms, a *mystery* isn’t a puzzle to be figured out. It implies a depth and breadth that almost overwhelms, yet into which we are invited. God Himself is a *mystery*, not because we can never know Him, but because there is always *more* to know, *more* to discover, *more* to be revealed and to surprise us. God invites us into the mystery of His love, into a relationship with Him that is ever-new, ever-deepening, and meant to be everlasting. It follows from this understanding that God would also reveal Himself to us in mysterious, and unexpected ways. God speaks to us all the time: in the people we meet, the daily tasks we perform, and the *signs* we see along our path. Recently I came across a *literal sign* outside of a church that struck me as an important message from God for all of us to contemplate, especially during this time of the Fast. The sign read: *Taste your words before spitting them out.*

Words are good. Through them we communicate information, encourage others, and show love and affection. Through words we teach and learn. Words can be strung together in expressions of beauty and wonder. They can form the basis for sorrow and reconciliation. Words make us laugh and make us think. Words can also hurt as much as a blow to the body. The poem we teach children about “sticks and stones” is meant to strengthen them, and to show that regardless of how another tries to bully or hurt us with hateful words, their language can’t *really* harm us. Words can bounce off us like rubber or roll off our backs. Despite the good intention of protecting our kids – and ourselves – it’s undeniable that language can be used as a weapon of mass destruction. Every one of us has deployed words in this way – and we’ve all been ground zero for another’s sarcasm, anger, and meanness. Words are more than dictionary definitions. They can be chosen specifically to hurt and delivered as a poison designed to emotionally or spiritually sicken the recipient. Words have a taste: sweet, savory, delightful; or bitter and spoiled. The less we attend to our words – instead allowing ourselves to express every twinge of anger, jealousy and hurt

within us – the more our *palates* will change, and sin will season our thoughts, words and actions.

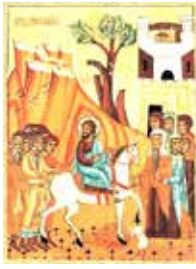
The best example I can think of where we often neglect to “taste” our words is social media. It’s easy to say whatever we want, even if it’s nasty, sarcastic or judgmental of another, while hiding behind a comment box on a blog, or from the distance created by Facebook or Twitter. We encounter very few of the “friends” we communicate with on social media on a regular basis – if ever – in real life. This “protection” makes us feel free to say things that are vulgar and cruel. I’ve seen such “wrath” on social media from basically good people who profess their faith openly, but express opinions and disagreements uncharitably, sometimes using profanity. Politics, religion, child-rearing – even where one chooses to buy his morning coffee – are all topics that cause heated debate and can lead to hateful attacks. Some people take things too far, using their words as *virtual* weapons; but we’re all susceptible to lashing out or fighting back by saying things we shouldn’t to prove we’re right. Ever since the Serpent engaged the Woman in conversation in the Garden and twisted God’s word to introduce chaos and dis-

trust, we've been in a battle to regain proper control of language, to use it to elevate rather than decimate.

It's no *mystery* that God put that church sign in my path during the Great Fast to remind me to pay attention to my thoughts and words, to *fast* from jumping to conclusions and judging others, and from trying to prove my superiority by cutting them down. Meditating on Christ's life, and especially His Passion and Death, should be the *palate cleanser* we all need for considering how we speak to – and about – others. Scripture gives us numerous instances of people vilifying Jesus and chastising Him for not adhering to the Law as they believed He should. (See Mark 7:1-13 for one example). As He made His way toward Golgotha the crowd jeered and insulted Him. One wonders if Jesus had come today how He'd be treated on social media by any one of us: "Saw you talking to a prostitute. Is that a "good look" for a rabbi? You should know better! #Scandalous." Would any of us *recognize* Him, *hear* His words and *follow* His example? Do we truly *recognize, hear* and *follow* Him now?

"Taste and see that the Lord is good" (Psalm 34:9). The Psalmist's exhortation is perhaps more significant in this time of divisiveness and anger than at any other, and it's the seasoning that should flavor our words and our thoughts. As we continue our pilgrimage toward Pascha, let's pay attention to how our words *taste* before we spit them at others. Let's taste the goodness of the Word of the Lord and be the voice of His love in the world. **ECL**

Walking with Jesus through Holy Week



icons (public domain): Entrance into Jerusalem, Mystical Supper, Crucifixion, Burial & Entombment

When we participate in the liturgies of Holy Week we are really present at the events they remember. In these talks we will reflect on the liturgies of Holy Week and how we accompany Jesus on his journey from Palm Sunday to Good Friday. We will look at the meaning of hymns and rituals that help us truly participate in this part of the life of our Lord.

9:30-10am welcome/registration
10am-11am morning presentation
11am-noon private prayer
(Confessions available)
noon-1pm lunch (full meal)
1pm-2pm afternoon presentation

Presented by Fr. Frank Hanincik, pastor of St Michael's Byzantine Catholic Church, Allentown, and SS. Peter & Paul Byzantine Catholic Church, Palmerton, PA. Fr. Frank is a native of Hazleton and a 2008 graduate of SS. Cyril and Methodius Byzantine Catholic Seminary. He has served parishes in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Connecticut.

Held **March 17, 2018. Cost: \$25** includes lunch (full meal).

Registration/information: holydormition@gmail.com or 570-788-1212 ext 407 (leave message). Register by Monday, March 12. Overnight accommodations available. You are welcome to join the friars for Saturday 7am Matins, 8am Divine Liturgy.

This day of recollection is sponsored by the Office of Eastern Christian Formation of the Eparchy of Passaic and the Franciscan Friars.



Holy Dormition Friary, home of the Byzantine Franciscans, is located at 712 Highway 93 at Main Street in Sybertsville 18251 aka Sugarloaf, PA 18249 byzfranciscan.org



SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES

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

THE BOOK OF JOB

Do they still teach Great Books of Western Literature to college freshmen? Time was you were handed a paperback book the size of a Thanksgiving turkey and two thoughts crossed your mind: "Do I have to carry this thing?" And, "How am I ever going to read all this?" Somewhere in there was probably a selection from the Old Testament book of Job. Your professor probably approached Job (*pronounced "jobe" by the way*) as a testimony to the resiliency of the human spirit, or as an example of an extraordinary individual asserting himself, or as a brave challenge to an outdated religion. That take on Job, nestled between the covers of a literature book, rubbing shoulders with *Antigone* and *Hamlet*, may have made sense at the time. But that's not the whole story.

Taken on its own, the book of Job is a two-story story. Chapters 1-2 and the last ten verses of the final chapter tell a very simple story in very simple prose: Once upon a time, in a land far away, there lived a good man who had everything and lost it all in three fell swoops. Why? Because up in heaven, God and Satan (here presented as God's District Attorney) are testing Job's faith. Is he pious because he gets rewarded or is his faith sincere and unselfish? Job remains faithful and, in the last verses of the book, gets back everything he lost and then some, living to the ripe old age of 140. Up in heaven, the story of Job seems to be about trials and rewards.

Down on earth, the remaining 36 chapters are a series of speeches composed in exquisite Hebrew poetry. Job laments his suffering, raises questions about God's justice, and defends himself against four "friends" who come to console him but end up accusing him of sin. The "friends" are smug and judgmental. They know their theology: Job MUST be guilty because God CAN'T be wrong! Job asks only to for a chance to hear God's reasons. Here is the heart of Job's outcry: "I know that my Redeemer lives and he shall stand at last on the earth and after my skin is destroyed this I know; that in my flesh I shall see God, who I shall see for myself, and my eyes shall behold and not another: how my heart yearns within me!" (19:25-27).

Job gets his wish. God appears and starts questioning Job about the wonders of nature (chapters 38-41). Can Job explain the stars? Does Job know how to make a hippopotamus or a crocodile? God's point is: if you can't figure out earthly things, how can you demand answers to heavenly decisions about life and death? Job, satisfied to have had this chance to speak with God, agrees: "I have uttered what I did not understand, things too wonderful for me which I did not know" (Job 42:3).

After all these beautiful, poetic speeches, many a reader may be disappointed that Job seems to cave in so easily. In fact, between the covers of the Old Testament, there is no answer to Job's prob-

lem or to Job's prayer. It is only when the book of Job becomes part of a bigger book—a Christian Bible that includes the New Testament—that Job gets his answer. Because Job's Redeemer DID stand on earth and DOES live forever. That Redeemer experienced suffering as great as Job's and, unlike Job, did so willingly and absolutely, undeniably innocently. Job's Redeemer rose from the dead and was seen, heard and touched by His disciples. Job's Redeemer promised that Job and the rest of us could also rise in our bodies: "in his flesh" Job will indeed see his Redeemer at the Resurrection on the last day (1 Corinthians 15; 1 Thessalonians 4). In a very real way, the final chapter of Job has yet to be written and, when it is written, we will be part of the story too.

In the meantime, the book of Job argues against fast, simple answers to life's difficult questions. It argues against an arrogant, judgmental faith. Job models trust in God even in times of temptation. Job encourages insistent, honest, uncensored prayer that keeps the conversation with God going. Job argues against believing we have all the answers. Job's experience of suffering raises a life and death question to which Jesus Christ is the only answer.

Sample the book of Job for yourself. In addition to Job's climactic speech in chapter 19, check out the beautiful praise for Wisdom (chapter 28) and God's questions to Job in chapters 38 through 41. **ECL**



UNDERSTANDING ICONS

Father Joseph Bertha, Ph.D.

MARIAPOCS: GAZING INTO ETERNITY

Part 3

The whole intention of any icon is to open up the portals of eternity to show us a glimpse into eternity here on the face of the earth. When we gaze at the most compelling feature of the icon, particularly the wonder working icon of Our Lady of Mariapocs, we are enraptured by the glory of the Theotokos' countenance (the likeness of God refuling on her face). Upon closer examination we notice the portrayal of the eyes of the Mother of God. Her right eye looks out at her Son resting on her left arm. Whereas her left eye peers out of the icon, looking at the viewer of the icon, seeking the individual (sinner) approaching her and her Son. Of course, her sight is integrated with that of her Son. Jesus looks downwards with both eyes obedient to his mother.



White silk covering for the Mariapoc Icon

Also interlinked with this gaze is the arrangement of the hands. The Hodegetria Theotokos implores, intercedes extending her entire right arm and hand to indicate her divine Son. Crossing over her hand is the right hand of the Christ child. His fingers form the anagram of the Tetragrammaton: ICXC, the unpronounced name of the Godhead, YHWH. He responds to her petition; He grants the intercession of the Holy Virgin. With sophisticated hand and arm gestures God's mercy is flows from Mother to Son to petitioner.

Another indirect detail in this icon is the position of the Son; He is seated at the left side, directly in front of the heart of His holy Mother. While the divine Son points directly to his mother's throat which silently voices the petitions of the petitioners before her. His right hand extended in blessing is also directly above the black seed pod necklace of the canna lily—which can be interpreted as the ten beads of a rosary—a decade of Hail Marys encircle the Holy Mothers throat.

Liturgical aspects of the Maria Pocs icon

Byzantines have a deep penchant for beseeching the Holy Virgin during the many cycles of the Liturgical year. Two Hymns in particular enjoy renown with the Maria Pocs icon:

The Akathist Hymn

Originally composed in sixth century Byzantium, the Akathist Hymn (*a kathistos* means standing), was chanted as an intercession to the Holy Virgin to defend the city of Constantinople against an attack. An icon of the Holy Theotokos was processed around the imperial city which was spared from the invasion through her holy intercession. Centuries later an Akathist Hymn was specifically composed for the Mariapocs icon.

The twenty-four *oikoi* (literally, houses, verses) detail the historical background of the three weepings of the icon, together with the miraculous healings wrought through her intercession.

Paraklesis

In ninth century Byzantium, another Marian Hymn, the Paraklesis, dually meaning simultaneously "intercession" and "consolation," was composed and was prescribed to be chanted daily during the fast period preceding the feast of the Dormition (15 August). This August feast is one of the primary pilgrimages held in honor of the Mother of Maria Pocs.

The Paraklesis is a series of intercessions addressed to the Holy Virgin, petitioning her deliverance from all sorts of catastrophes, floods, fire, famine, earthquakes, civil wars, and riot. It consists of a series of supplications imploring her consolation, especially during these particular times of desperation. Some of the Paraklesis verses are visualized in the Mariapocs icon:

- 1) She is the safe Harbor depicted as calm ripples in her *maphorion*.
- 2) Significantly and most appropriately for Maria Pocs icon her tears wipe away sins, her tears are signs of repentance.

The Gift of Tears

The spiritual significance of tears cannot be undervalued. *Penthos* or the gift of tears is a favorite Byzantine teaching of the Desert Fathers. Tears flowing from our eyes are not only a sign of emotional release but indicate a deeper spiritual dimension of the repentance and atonement of sin.

One of the most dramatic illustrations of the compunction of tears is found in Genesis 37-50 and the account of Joseph and his brothers. Joseph weeps tears on eight occasions, each time indicates his profound intercession and atonement for his family. The Scriptural accounts of Joseph's tear shedding is found throughout the Byzantine Lenten Triodion, they serve as a guide for our own personal repentance and contrition for sin.

In Psalm 126 we pray: "May those who sow in tears, reap with shouts of joy." We also recall the tears Mary Magdalene shed in the Garden as she recognizes Our Lord after His Resurrection calling Him "Rabbi," Teacher.

Then we have the wonder working tears of Our Lady of Maria Pocs shed on three separate occasions. Her tears indicate not only her presence in the icon, but her intercession and expiation for sins as a sin of compassion and deep love for sinners.

Votive offerings

Votive offerings, offerings of wax effigies to the shrine which show the various intentions offered to the Holy Virgin, beseeching her heavenly intercession. These figures (see photos) range from farm animals, pigs, horses, chickens, etc. to various parts of ailing human anatomy. Also offerings consist of religious medals depicting the Holy

Virgin with Christ child. A large collection consists of gold wedding rings which on the Maria Pocs decorative coverings which were fashioned into floreate patterns on the white silk icon covering.



The Votive Offering of Mariapoc

There are even prison ankle chains, and one of the more interesting miracles a beehive on the exterior wall of the basilica, which houses the gift of honey/bees from a healed beekeeper.

All of these gifts reveal the petitions of the countless faithful making pilgrimages to this holy site. Whether it was a rebellious domesticated animal at the family farm; or the unfair imprisonment of an individual, or the promise of the reparation of sins for an abusive marital relationship, perhaps the promise to find a spouse. All of these treasures offered to the Monastery proclaim the powerful intercession granted through the agency of the Holy Mother of God of Maria Pocs.

Countless pilgrims wend their way, chiefly by foot to pay homage to this miraculous wonder-working icon.

All pilgrims seek to make themselves present to the Holy Virgin in order to make their requests. Blessed John Paul II did this on 18 August 1991. Beethoven, Mozart, Empress Maria Theresa among others presented themselves before this Greek Catholic icon at Saint Stephen's in Vienna.

All humbly prostrate themselves before the Holy Virgin and Christ Child addressing their supplications.

Actually, when present at the Shrine one can view the crystalline tears streaming from the eyes of believers offering in deep humility their repentance before the Holy Pair. Paying close attention to the first sentence of the Gospel passage from Saint Luke, they hear the Virgin Mary proclaim: "For nothing is impossible with God." (Luke 1:37-45) **ECL**



Exterior of Beehive

SPIRITUAL REFLECTIONS

Father Lewis Rabayda



SHEDDING COMFORT TO BE VULNERABLE TO CHRIST

Comfort on our spiritual path can lead us to destinations where we may not want to be. We often become very comfortable in our lives, because our whole idea of progress in worldly life is directed towards this end—to be comfortable. We want to make sure that we live in a peaceful home, country, and world; we want to make sure that we have enough of the foods we like; we want to have a proper home and a good and reliable car. We also want to go to a church that makes us feel good about ourselves and to assure us that we have arrived at the level of holiness that God is calling us to. However, if we achieve this comfort in all aspects of our lives, then to our surprise, we may find ourselves distant from Christ. A good question to ask ourselves is: have we valued comfort with God more, than applying His uncomfortable commandments to our lives?

Yes, we can be very comfortable when we neglect reflection on the commandments of God by assuming that we are not sinning. We have worked very long and fought valiantly through this life to get to our level of comfort, and we want to believe that we have arrived at a state of sinlessness. But the Scriptures, the Church Fathers, and especially our Lenten devotions teach us over and over again the need to constantly focus on conforming our lives to Christ more and more. If we think that we have arrived at sainthood, then we have fallen for the chief of all vices: pride. The truly humble and God-fearing person knows that no matter how righteous they perceive themselves to be, there is always another level of holiness to be attained—we can always grow even closer to God.

We need Christ to be a part of our lives at every stage and at every moment. There is no time

when we can look at ourselves and say that we, alone, are sufficient. There is no time in our lives when we can say that our comfort is more important than opening ourselves up to the healing salve of Christ. Because when we open ourselves up, when we bear all and expose our innermost self to Christ, we will not be in comfort, we will be in a state of vulnerability. When we freely invite Christ to see the dark parts of our soul, we freely invite His Light to shine in that darkness, and to dispel that darkness. If we can make ourselves uncomfortable for a little bit so that we can see ourselves as Christ sees us, then we will come to a new understanding of peace and love. And we will see how the peace that Christ gives, is so much better than any peace we attempt to create for ourselves. **ECL**

DAY OF SPIRITUALITY SUNDAY, MARCH 18, WARREN, OH

The Benedictine Sisters of the Byzantine Church at Queen of Heaven Monastery, Warren, Ohio, are offering a Day of Spirituality in preparation for the Resurrection of Christ, on Sunday, March 18, 2018, from 1:30 PM to 4:30 PM. It will be held at Saints Peter and Paul

Parish Center at 180 Belvedere Avenue, NE, Warren, Ohio. To register, please call 330-856-1813 or e-mail qohm@netdotcom.com by Sunday, March 11, 2018.

The presenter will be Reverend Thomas Dansak. He is an excellent and knowledgeable

speaker, well versed on many topics. His presentation will be, "Repentance: Asking Forgiveness for Sin."

There will be time for reflection, questions, and refreshments, and an opportunity to receive the Mystery (Sacrament) of Reconciliation.



SCHOOL OF PRAYER

Father G. Scott Boghossian

THY WILL BE DONE

The third petition of the Our Father is, "Thy will be done on earth as it is heaven" (Mt. 6:10). When the Apostle Paul encountered Jesus Christ on the road to Damascus, he asked, "Lord, what do you want me to do?" (Ac. 22:10). One of the signs of true conversion is a heart that says to God, "Lord, only tell me what you want me to do, and I will do it." A true follower of Christ will say with the prophet David, "Teach me to do Your will, for You are my God" (Ps. 143:10). In the Garden of Gethsemane, our Example prayed "not My will, but Your will be done" (Mt. 26:39). When we entered the state of sanctifying grace through faith, repentance, and baptism, God infused into our hearts a desire to do His will. Perhaps over time, we have grown slack in our commitment to know and do God's will. Let us renew our baptismal promises by renouncing the devil and all his works, committing our lives to Christ, making a thorough confession and receiving absolution. Only then can we sincerely and intelligently pray, "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

But what is God's will for me? God's Word reveals God's will. The Ten Commandments are

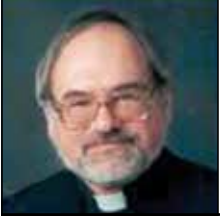
God's holy will. If we are intent on doing the will of God, then we will be determined to keep the Ten Commandments, and all that they entail. We find the will of God in the Christ's Sermon on the Mount, the teachings of the Apostolic writers in the Epistles of the New Testament, and the 2000-year-old consistent and unchanged moral teaching of the Catholic Church. We must study the Word of God to know the will of God. When we ask that God's will be done, we are praying, "Father, empower me to live a holy life in obedience to Your law."

When we pray that God's will be done, we are also asking to recognize and accept God's will. Nothing happens that God has not willed or willed to permit. He is working all things together for our good (Rm. 8:28). The ancient desert fathers taught "patient acceptance of whatever comes," and more recent saints teach "total abandonment to divine providence" and "uniformity with God's will." Inconveniences, temptations, trials, and difficulties of all kinds enter our lives. They come to us only because God allows them for our highest good, for our eternal salvation. Old Testament figures like Job and the patriarch

Joseph show us how God brings good out of evil. The Cross of Christ is the supreme lesson in how God allows evil only to bring from it a greater good. When we pray "Thy will be done," we are saying, "Father, I resign myself to Your care, and I accept whatever trials and difficulties You allow in my life with faith and patient resignation."

There is a particular manner in which we should do and accept the will of God. We pray both to accomplish and receive the will of God as it is done in heaven. The traditional interpretation of the phrase "on earth as it is in heaven" is to do and accept the will of God as perfectly as the angels and saints do in heaven. The angels and heavenly spirits obey God and acquiesce to His holy will with supreme joy and intense love. When we pray, "as it is in heaven," we intend to pray: "Father, may I do Your will, and accept all that You send me, not grudgingly or with a murmuring spirit, but with joy, enthusiasm, and love for You."

May the will of God be done by us and in us in all things, and may it be done as perfectly as it is done in heaven. Amen. **ECL**



THE BYZANTINE LITURGY

By Archpriest David Petras, SEOD

THE IMITATION OF CHRIST

We learn of our Lord Jesus the Messiah (Christ) through our faith. Our faith comes through hearing the preaching of the Apostles. Saint Paul describes the process: "If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved But how can they call on Him in Whom they have not believed? And how can they believe in Him of Whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone to preach? And how can people preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring the good news!" (Roman 10:9.14-15) We come to faith through hearing the word of God proclaimed in the church, from reading the words of the apostles inspired by God in the Scriptures, and by the grace of God in our hearts, as Jesus taught, "No one can come to Me unless the Father Who sent Me draw him, and I will raise him on the last day." (John 6:44)

The question for us now is: "Who is this Jesus, and what does He mean for me?" The traditional answer is that He is our Lord, our Savior and our Redeemer. When Adam was disobedient in Eden, he brought sin and death into the world, but when our Lord was obedient to the Father even to death on the cross, He brought justification and life. The sin of Adam was a parable of how we all sin. The commandment of God was that we should not eat of the trees of the knowledge of good and evil and of life. We must understand this in faith - it was not God who was depriving us of life, but that we could not have true life in God by our own human powers but only through the grace of God. That is why the serpent was able to deceive Eve and Adam by saying, "God knows well that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened and you will be like gods, who know good and evil" (Genesis 3:5). Having been dis-

obedient and having rejected the grace of God, the offense against the infinite Good could only be healed by the Good Himself, by God, Who took our human nature so that in one person obedience to God's plan for life might be restored, as again Saint Paul teaches, "For if by that one person's transgression the many died, how much more did the grace of God and the gracious gift of the one person Jesus Christ overflow for the many?" (Romans 5:15). This is all very true, but one problem is that this can be interpreted in a very legalistic way, that is, that there has to be a propitiation equal to the crime, and this propitiation could only be suffered by God Himself, offered as a sacrifice to the Father. Therefore, nothing that we do or don't do makes any difference, only that we accept Jesus as our Savior.

Again, in many ways this is very true. Saint Maximus the Confessor wrote that all the good we do is done through the grace of God. Our only contribution is our free will, choosing life in Christ. Our lives can be transformed only by God through the mystery of the Incarnation, just as the bread and wine of the Liturgy become the Body and Blood of Christ by the power of God's Holy Spirit, and not by our human power, as the priest in the Liturgy of Saint Basil prays - "not because of our righteousness, for we have done nothing good on earth." This is a model of salvation, but there is one dimension missing: the value of our liberation from sin.


The Son of God did indeed take on our human nature to free it from sin through His cross and resurrection. At the same time, He is our Teacher, our rabbi, and not simply by words. By the way He lived His human life, He gave us a model of how our lives can be deified, achieving the desire of Adam and Eve. In the Gospel of Saint Matthew, our Lord tells us: "So be perfect, just as

your heavenly Father is perfect" (Matthew 5:48). We can do this by renouncing all that is evil and committing ourselves to Christ in the grace of baptism. Jesus tells us that we must imitate his way of life: "Whoever wishes to come after Me must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow Me." (Mark 8:34). This may mean subordinating our life for the love of our neighbor, again as Jesus observes, "This is my commandment: love one another as I love you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends" (John 15:12-13).


This is why we venerate saints. Through them, life in Christ shines forth, and their lives become a part of God's salvation. Saint Paul explains, "Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh, I am filling up what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ on behalf of His body, which is the church" (Colossians 1:24). We are all called to be saints, we are all called to live as He did, possible through His grace and only in His grace, as Saint Paul reveals: "yet I live, no longer I, but Christ lives in me; insofar as I now live in the flesh, I live by faith in the Son of God Who has loved me and given Himself up for Me" (Galatians 2:20). This, then, becomes the basic moral principle of living a life in the grace of Christ. Again, Saint Paul: "Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ" (1 Corinthians 11:1). Our salvation is more than simply a legal exoneration through the suffering and death of Jesus, but a transforming experience by which we are really freed from sin and come to share in the divine nature" (2 Peter 1:4). How this happens is different for every one of us, for we do not imitate the life of Christ in its historical details, but in the circumstances in which we are born and live and die, contributing to the reality of the Body of Christ and the image of Christ in every person. **ECL**

Sisters Servants of Mary Immaculate
64th HOLY DORMITION PILGRIMAGE
August 11-12, 2018
His Beatitude Sviatoslav presiding
MARY, OUR MODEL OF PRAYER
"Do Whatever He Tells You..."

WORKSHOP PRESENTERS



August 11th - "Mary, Mother of the Word of God" (English)
 Fr. Jack Custer is Rector of the Cathedral of St Michael the Archangel, Passaic NJ and Syn-cellus for the State of New Jersey. He is a native of Jersey City, NJ and a Greek Catholic by choice. He holds degrees in Sacred Scripture and Theology from the Pontifical Biblical Institute and the Gregorian University in Rome. He served for thirteen years as Dean and Professor of Scripture at the Byzantine Catholic Seminary, Pittsburgh PA. He has authored four books and numerous articles, and his column, "Searching the Scriptures" appears monthly in the *Eastern Catholic Life* (newspaper of the Eparchy of Passaic).



August 12th - "Her Choice Made Us Free" (Ukrainian)
 V. Rev. Dr. Ivan Kaszczak is a Church Historian who enjoys sharing his extensive knowledge of the history of the Ukrainian Catholic Church in the United States. He has served as a military chaplain, Director of Religious Education, Vocations Director, and Vice-Rector of the minor seminary for four years. Fr. Ivan is the author of several books and his latest book is entitled *Metropolitan Andrei Sheptytsky and the Establishment of the Ukrainian Catholic Church in the United States*. Fr. Ivan is pastor of Holy Trinity Parish in Kerhonkson and Hunter, NY.

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

Divine Liturgy on Saturdays at 4 PM: March 3, 10, 17, 24, & 31

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

of October and is now offering weekly Divine Liturgy in the area. This community will serve the northern part of South Carolina as well as Charlotte, 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 Saturdays at 4 PM. If you would like to participate in any way, or have questions please contact Ron Somich at 440.477.6389 or ron.somich@gmail.com. The website <https://carolinabyzantine.com/> will be coming soon – please check that out for news, upcoming gatherings, and service times.

Pre Cana Classes for those preparing for Marriage

Saints Peter and Paul Byzantine Catholic Church

Sundays, April 15th and April 22nd from 2-5PM

Saints Peter and Paul Church, Route 93, Beaver Meadows, PA

COST: \$50 per couple for the two Sundays

Participants are asked to contact their pastors. Pastors will contact Father James Demko to inform him of the number of couples arriving from his parish. Registration is 15 minutes before the first session.

SEASONAL REFLECTIONS

Father Ronald Hatton



THE GREAT FAST AND THE CROSS

“And summoning the crowd along with His disciples He said to them: ‘If anyone wishes to come along behind Me, let him deny himself utterly and take up his cross and follow Me. For whoever wishes to save his soul will lose it; but whoever will lose his soul for the sake of Me and the good tidings will save it. For what does it profit a man to gain the whole cosmos and to forfeit his soul? For what might a man give in exchange for his soul? For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him too will the Son of Man be ashamed when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels.’” (Mark 8: 34-38, Hart; the Gospel for Cross Veneration Sunday.)

As I write this, we have just begun the Great Fast; by the time you read this, it will be around Cross Veneration Sunday, the half-way point of the Fast. This Sunday is always so profound to me, as the readings are a fresh reminder of not only why we journey through this season every year, but also why we need to make these words a part of our everyday life. On the one hand, Jesus is telling us that if we are to really be His disciples, we must willingly walk the Way of the Cross with Him. As He goes to be crucified for our sins, so that He can put an end to sin and death, so too we are to crucify ourselves to sin in our life, that is, to repent, to turn away from our old way of doing things and turn towards God and the vocation that He has in store for us. But also, the reading from the Letter to the Hebrews says, “For we have a high priest [Christ] Who is not incapable of suffering along with our weaknesses, but rather one Who has been tested in all things like us, without sin” (Heb. 4: 15). When you read

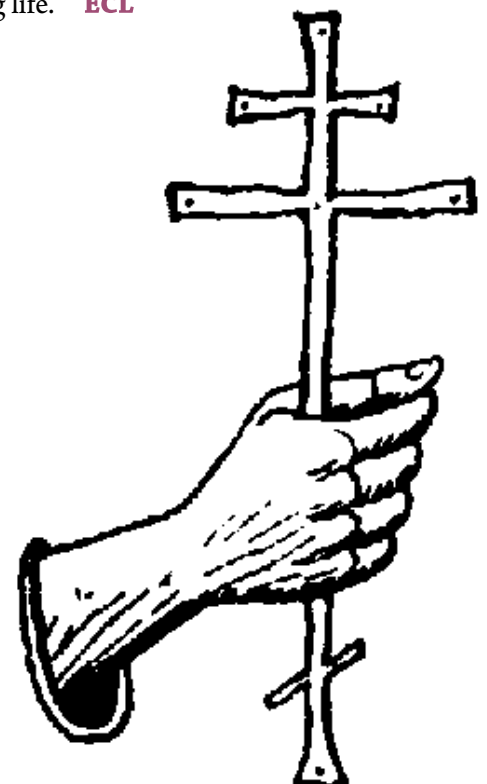
these two passages, don’t you get the sense that we, meaning Jesus and us, are “all in this together”? On the one hand, He tells us that we must be willing to die to sin in order to live for Him, and on the other hand, He “has been tested in all things like us...”!

The popular way to look at Lent is “giving up stuff” for a month or more, and then go back to living our lives as we did before the Fast began. I give up chocolate, but it’s alright, because those chocolate Easter eggs are waiting for us. I give up meat, but can’t wait until Bright Friday, when I can have a 16-ounce steak! But this is not what Lent is about. It is about taking up our crosses and following Christ to the place where sin is crucified forever! Sin is not to be merely set aside for a time but expelled from our lives for the rest of our lives. Anything less is not coming along behind Him. To paraphrase His words, what does it profit us to “give up” something for a time, just to return to it?

In a more proper manner, those times of “giving up things” should be accompanied by a longing for those things, and yet resisting the temptation, and fighting with all our will to deny our stomachs that pleasure that it so badly desires. Fasting that leads to temptation is a constant reminder that we are slaves to our bellies, that we are slaves to our passions, and that our life is turned around backwards. We must learn what slaves we are to things that stand between us and “coming along behind” Christ because what does it profit us to feed our various hungers, whether for food or satisfying other desires, if we lose our souls in the bargain? And there are few things in our lives more tyrannical than our stomachs and love for

sweets and meats and other delicacies, so fasting is a good means to remind us how weak we are in giving in to other temptations in life. And if we can learn to say “no” to our bellies, we can learn how to say “no” to sin in our lives. Saying “no” to lusts, to passions, to enduring the trials and tribulations of life without giving in to despair.

In the story of The Rich Ruler, who asks Jesus what he needs to do to inherit eternal life, He tells him, “One thing is still lacking in you; sell everything, whatever you have, and distribute it to the destitute, and you will have a treasury in the heavens, and follow me” (cf. Luke 18: 18-22). During the Great Fast, Jesus is telling us to make choices: either for the things of this world to which we are enslaved, or for the things of heaven and everlasting life. **ECL**





SEMINARIAN REFLECTIONS

Seminarian Paul Varchola West

JOURNEYING THROUGH THE GREAT FAST

As we continue to journey down the path of the Great Fast, I have a confession to make. Although I have been a member of the Byzantine Catholic Church for thirty-three years, since the ripe old age of two weeks, I am a relative new-comer to the fasting traditions our Church has come to re-embrace over the past few years. Truth be told, as I am sure is the case with many of us, fasting really was not of prime emphasis growing up. I fondly remember being a little boy and getting very excited when Lent rolled around because that meant the opportunity for a Burger King fish sandwich on a Friday here and there! Well, now that I am grown and in seminary, my how things have changed!

I have come to learn that fasting means much more than simply not eating meat on Friday for only six weeks of the year. In fact, fasting is about far more than avoiding certain foods on certain days. Fasting is a tool by which we may personally grow closer to our God in prayer and in presence. So, what does this have to do with food?

When I first entered seminary, I was struggling with this whole concept of fasting. So, I did what any good Greek Catholic boy would do: I went and talked to Baba. She shared with me the following sage advice: "Paul. You eat when you eat and you don't eat when you don't eat and you don't get sick." Thanks Baba – What on earth does that mean? After mulling that one over for a bit, I consulted a very wise priest who met me with the following: "I challenge you to go eat a really big lunch, then go to the chapel and try to pray." So, I did. That time spent in attempted prayer was all but wasted. I could not focus and I kept nodding off in the warm, sun-lit chapel. There was no conversation with God; I was too full! It was at that moment that I finally understood what Baba meant.

Fasting is not about denying yourself the necessary energy that enables us to complete our day. It is about growing closer to God and engaging in a conversation with Him to forge a relationship. We need to empty ourselves of the earthly food on which we rely in order that we may fill our-

selves with the presence and love of Christ. This does not mean abstaining from food until one becomes ill. This means knowing our personal limits and weaknesses so that we may not be controlled by them. Fasting is about examining where one currently is and admitting, "I can do much better." By cleansing ourselves of our bad habits we are not only making room for God within ourselves, but we are being drawn ever closer to His presence and Glory.

This by no means indicates that we may shrug off the requirements that our Bishop has placed before us. Meeting these requirements is a base from which we may begin to build ourselves. Of course, if one has medical needs that prohibits them from fully participating in fasting requirements they are encouraged to speak with their pastor. I speak from experience. I have several significant food allergies and other medical issues that keep me from fully embracing every single aspect of the fast as it pertains to food. I work closely with my spiritual father to help me develop healthy alternatives that allow me to fully

embrace the spirit and essence of the Great Fast. I urge anyone in a similar situation to do the same. The results can be eye opening.

Finally, please remember that all forms of fasting are rooted in prayer. During the Great Fast we are all encouraged to pull back on the food and increase in prayer. We are shifting our priorities by making a little more room for God in both our person and our schedules. Add a few minutes to your private prayer rule. Pick up a Bible and read what our Lord has to say. Attend the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts as mean to strengthen yourself up during the week. Do not deprive yourself of receiving that life-sustaining gift that is the Eucharist. Most importantly, do not think that just because the Great Fast has already started that it is too late to enjoy its benefits. I assure you, it is never too late to turn to God and say, "Lord, today is the day I choose to make myself better, not only for me, but for You." **ECL**

WHEN TRAVELING TO THE SOUTH THIS WINTER PLEASE VISIT OUR CHURCHES

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

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

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

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

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

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

Our Lady of the Sign
7311 Lyons Road

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

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

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

UPCOMING EPARCHIAL AND PARISH EVENTS

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MARCH

- 4 Third Sunday of the Great Fast
Veneration of the Holy Cross
- 11 Fourth Sunday of the Great Fast
Sunday of Saint John of the Ladder
- 18 Fifth Sunday of the Great Fast
Sunday of Saint Mary of Egypt
- 24 Lazarus Saturday
- 25 Flowery Sunday * Annunciation
Triumphal Entry of Our Lord into Jerusalem
- 26 Great and Holy Monday
- 27 Great and Holy Tuesday
- 28 Great and Holy Wednesday
- 29 Great and Holy Thursday
Chancery closed March 29 - April 3
- 30 Great and Holy Friday
Day of strict fast Chancery closed*
- 31 Great and Holy Saturday

APRIL

- 1 PASCHA * THE GREAT DAY *
THE RESURRECTION OF OUR LORD,
GOD, AND SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST

JULY

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

AUGUST

- 4-8 Altar Server Camp
Carpathian Village, Canadensis, PA
- 11-12 Annual Holy Dormition Pilgrimage
Sloatsburg, NY

SEPTEMBER

- 1-2 Annual Pilgrimage in Honor of Our
Lady of Perpetual Help
Uniontown, PA