



EASTERN CATHOLIC LIFE

Official Publication of the Byzantine Catholic Eparchy of Passaic

VOL. LV, NO. 11

NOVEMBER 2019

2019 BISHOP'S APPEAL

Pledges can be made Now through December 31

Glory to Jesus Christ!

Dear Friends,

For the past two years, when I write to you at this time of year, I have talked about the current suffering of the Body of Christ. According to the Bible, the Church is the Body of Christ. Christ continues his suffering for sinners in his Body throughout history, as Saint Paul tells us in his letter to the Colossians. I thank all of you who have prayed for protection for our own Ruthenian Church, and it seems that God has heard our humble prayers.

However, the Old Testament prophets warned the Chosen People: it does no good to ask God for protection from our enemies unless we also reform our own lives. The Bible also tells us that we cannot even reform our own lives, except by grace. So we humbly ask God for whatever we need for repentance. Especially we turn to the great sacramental mystery of Holy Communion, and the great sacramental mystery of Confession, and to the great mystery of reading the Scriptures, and to personal prayer of intercession for our loved ones and for union with God. Finally, the Scriptures tell us that God especially honors works of charity, sharing our wealth with the poor, and praying for those who least deserve it.

Last year I shared with you the comforting icon called "Joy of All who Sorrow". This year I share with you another treasure from your Heritage Center, "The Life Giving Spring". This is one of my favorite icons. It shows the Mother of God holding in her arms the Life-Giving Spring who is Jesus Christ. When Jesus visited the Temple in Jerusalem, He identified Himself as the God of Mount Sinai crying out, "Before Abraham was, I am." At the same time it says, "On the last and the greatest day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out saying, 'If any man thirst, let him come to me and drink. He that believes in me, as the Scriptures said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.'"

In the Icon of The Life Giving Spring, the Mother of God is seated in the center of a fountain, holding Jesus who is the life giving spring, and streams of water flow out into the pool around the fountain. We can see people with every kind of affliction coming to drink from the pool, and for those who can't drink, their friends are using cups to give them water. At the bottom, there are two men who can't drink, so their friends are pouring water on them; one is using a bucket! I remember years ago a friend was very spiritually sick, and he knew he was spiritually sick, but he told me he was so sick he couldn't even pray, so he asked me to pray for him. God blessed his humility, and within a few months he had a full conversion from his afflictions, and God blessed him with the gift of tears.

Some of the people are visibly sick. For most of them, like us, the afflictions are interior: depression,



ICON OF THE LIFE GIVING SPRING

despair, confusion, doubt, rage, discouragement, and so on. Jesus calls all of us to drink from his life giving water.

I love sharing these treasures each year with all of you. It is through your generosity, that I am able to continue the work of our Eparchy. This year, two more enthusiastic priests came with their families to help in our garden. Bringing them to the United States and helping them to get on their feet here is very expensive. This year our young adults held the first ever "Young Adult Convocation" at our great church in the great city of New York. Your generosity

made this event very successful with fifty participants. Other eparchies are planning to copy our success. Your generosity supports our mother Church in Europe, especially the seminary. Your generosity supports our seminarians in Pittsburgh, young men who are offering their lives to God in service to you. Your generosity helps pay for dog food for Father Hayer's German shepherd (just kidding). I look forward to seeing you all in the coming year. May God bless every one of you.

+Kurt Brunette



BLESSED THEODORE (ROMZHA) OF MUKACHEVO 72ND ANNIVERSARY OF MARTYRDOM Martyr for the Byzantine Catholic Faith

In the fall of 1939, the young priest was appointed spiritual director and professor of philosophy at the eparchial seminary in Uzhorod. He remained in that post for several years, inspiring his students and winning the admiration and respect of all those who met him. On May 31, 1943, during the critical time of the war, Bishop Alexander suddenly died. Blessed Theodore was ultimately chosen to replace him as bishop, and he was ordained to the episcopacy on September 24, 1944.

A month later, the entire territory of the Mukachevo Eparchy was occupied by the Soviet Army. On June 29, 1945, Subcarpathian Ruthenia was officially incorporated into the Soviet Ukraine. Thus, the young bishop found himself and his flock under Soviet atheistic rule.

At the beginning, Blessed Theodore tried not to antagonize the Soviet authorities, although some abusive and violent actions committed by the Soviet soldiers against the clergy were reported to him. But when the Soviet authorities started to expel the priests

from their parishes at random and confiscate the church property, he was forced to protest against such abuses.

The Soviets had a ready answer: "Since the attitude of the Vatican is hostile toward the Soviet Union, the Soviet government cannot tolerate within its borders the Byzantine (Greek) Catholic Church, loyal to the Vatican. Therefore, there is only one solution for you. You must recognize and submit to the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate of Moscow." Bishop Romzha immediately replied: "I will rather die than betray my Church!" This signaled the open persecution of the Greek Catholic Church in Subcarpathia.

Although the Soviet authorities confiscated his car, the Blessed Martyr traveled long distances by horse and buggy, to reassure his faithful and to encourage them to persevere until death, saying, "They are taking from us our own priests and churches, but they will never be able to take away our Faith from us."

The Soviets were unable to intimidate Blessed Theodore; therefore, they decided to liquidate him. First, they stated a highway accident. The horse-drawn carriage in which was riding was rammed by a military truck. Blessed Theodore was badly injured, but he survived the attempted murder. The passersby took him to the hospital in Mukachevo. In a few days, he began to regain his strength. Then suddenly, early on the morning of November 1, 1947, he was found dead. The Soviet authorities announced that the bishop had died from injuries suffered in his highway accident, but the people knew better.

By his dedicated life, Blessed Theodore highly glorified God, and by his heroic death, he gave living testimony to his Byzantine Catholic faith, achieving the crown of martyrs. In him, we, and our own Byzantine Catholic Church, gained a powerful protector in heaven. His feast day is celebrated on November 1.

Blessed Theodore was born on April 14, 1911, in Velikij Bychkiv, in the district of Maramorosh, Subcarpathian Ruthenia, Austro-Hungarian Empire. He was ordained to the priesthood in Rome on Christmas Day, December 24, 1936, and shortly afterward, was drafted into military service. Those were turbulent days in Europe. Even after his discharge from the army in August 1938, the danger of approaching war remained. For this reason, Bishop Alexander (Stojka) (1932-1943) did not permit him to leave the country, but appointed him to a remote parish of Berезovo, Maramorosh District.

FATHER RICHARD ROHRER ENTERS ETERNAL REST IN UKRAINE

"There was great intentionality in his desire to serve." On July 14, 2019 Father Richard Rohrer, a good friend of the Ukrainian Catholic University, departed this world.

Most Reverend Archbishop Borys (Gudziak), Metropolitan Archbishop of the Ukrainian Catholic Archeparchy of Philadelphia, expressed his condolences to UCU community and all who knew Father Richard.

Glory to Jesus Christ!

Dear relatives and friends of Father Richard, Dear volunteers and students, Dear brothers and sisters,

I would like to express my heartfelt sympathy and condolences to you on occasion of the sudden departure of a brother, a friend, a teacher, and first and foremost—a priest, Father Richard Rohrer of blessed memory.

Only two weeks ago, at the opening of the UCU English Language Summer School, I had the opportunity to be with you and with Father Richard. We spoke with hope about his impor-

tant ministry with women who had had abortions. For Father Richard his priesthood was a witness to the life that God gives. In this world and in eternity. Father Richard valued every life, especially that of the defenseless. He dedicated himself to helping those who were scarred by death. He wanted to encourage them and assure all of God's mercy, God's hospitality. His last day was the Sabbath. A beautiful liturgy, a visit to the shrine of a blessed martyr, Father Mykola Konrad, dancing with fellow teachers and students. It was a day of vitality, of Eucharist, of thanksgiving, and life. Father Richard came to Ukraine to the summer school to teach. His last lesson is a strong one. It is about the one sure thing in life. That we are called to pass from this world to eternity with God.

I know that you have experienced the seriousness of this passage. It is surely a shock and there is pain in your hearts. There is pain in my heart. We all remember the moments, or maybe the years, we had with a man of God, one of the children of our Heavenly Father. Allow me to thank you all in Father Rich-



ard's name. This summer school and your fellowship was very important to him. His family was important to him. Father Richard traveled a great distance to be with you, leaders, volunteers and students of the summer school. There was great intentionality in his desire to serve. He was happy to be with you. He was happy to pray, to celebrate, to dance. Father Richard more than anything wanted to give witness to Christ's Resurrection. To the victory of God's life over death. The best way to honor him is to give heartfelt attention to this message of hope.

I pray with you for the eternal memory of Father Richard who died dancing after having celebrated the Sunday Eucharist. We pray that he be in the memory, the mind, the heart, the House of God. That is our faith. That is our conviction. That is our peace. This was the faith, the profound conviction of Fr. Richard. It is his eternal peace.

Eternal memory, вічна пам'ять!
I embrace Father Richard and you in prayer.

In Christ, + Borys



Father Richard (Rick) P. Rohrer, former pastor Saints Cyril and Methodius Byzantine Catholic Church in Cary, NC, passed away July 14, 2019, in Lviv, Ukraine, at the age of 66. A priest of the Eparchy of Passaic, he was preceded in death by his parents, Helen and James Rohrer. Father Rick is survived by his brothers, Michael of Minneapolis, MN; Thomas of Lancaster, PA; and William of Alexandria, VA. A native of Michigan, Father Rick spent many years in Rome, Italy. He was planning on retiring in Ukraine. He was an exuberant, outgoing person who loved to dance and, in fact, died of a heart attack while dancing in Lviv. Father Rick was known for his total devotion to performing good works for everyone in any community in which he lived, not just members of his parish. People of all faiths, or no faith, relied on him for counseling and many times there would be a line of people outside of his rectory late into the night waiting to seek his counsel.

Father Rick was honored and memorialized immediately after his death with funeral services in Lviv. Saints Cyril & Methodius Church in Cary, NC, where Rick served as pastor for many years, celebrated 2 memorial services for him soon after his death. After his body was returned to the U.S., Bishop Kurt celebrated a Funeral Divine Liturgy for a priest on July 30, 2019, in Cary. On Friday, August 9, at 2:00 pm, Father Rick was buried in the Rohrer family plot in in the Oakwood (east) Cemetery Grass Lake, MI.

BISHOP'S ANNUAL APPEAL 2019 Byzantine Catholic Eparchy of Passaic

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

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PRIESTS ON RETREAT

By Father Jerome Wolbert, OFM

“Jesus departed to the mountain to pray, and he spent the night in prayer to God” (Luke 6:12). Following the example of our Lord, the priests who serve the Eparchy of Passaic gather every fall for a retreat, a time away to pray to God. This year we gathered for our retreat during the last week of September at the San Alfonso Retreat House in Long Branch, New Jersey, run by the Redemptorists.

As the priests gathered for retreat, one brought the major icons of Christ the Teacher and the Theotokos; another brought the candelabrum for the holy table; others brought chalices, disks, and other items for celebration of the Divine Liturgy.

Our time of prayer began with the Akathist to the Theotokos. Father Joseph Bertha gave a short talk about the Akathist and the icon of Our Lady of Máriapócs, which he brought for the celebration of the Akathist.

Throughout the week, we had several talks from Father Philip Sandrick, OSBM, of the Basilian monastery in Glen Cove, New York. Beginning our retreat, he wove together themes from the feast of the Exaltation of the Cross, reminding us that Christ imbues the cross with His power, turning what appears to be a weapon of destruction into a “weapon of peace.” What appears to be the victory of evil at the crucifixion becomes the sign of triumph, the victory of Jesus Christ, the God-Man, winning the victory for us who can share it as part of His Body.

This victory moves us to “abide in repentance,” to make repentance a constant part of our lives. Reminding us that we often dwell in anger, the vespers prayers of the feast of the Cross remind us that we find our joy in choosing to dwell instead in a humble repentance, allowing Christ to transform or transfigure the way we look at people and situations. We might remember how Job was angry at his unjust suffering, and after God spoke from the whirlwind, confirming that Job was just, Job still chooses to abide in repentance.

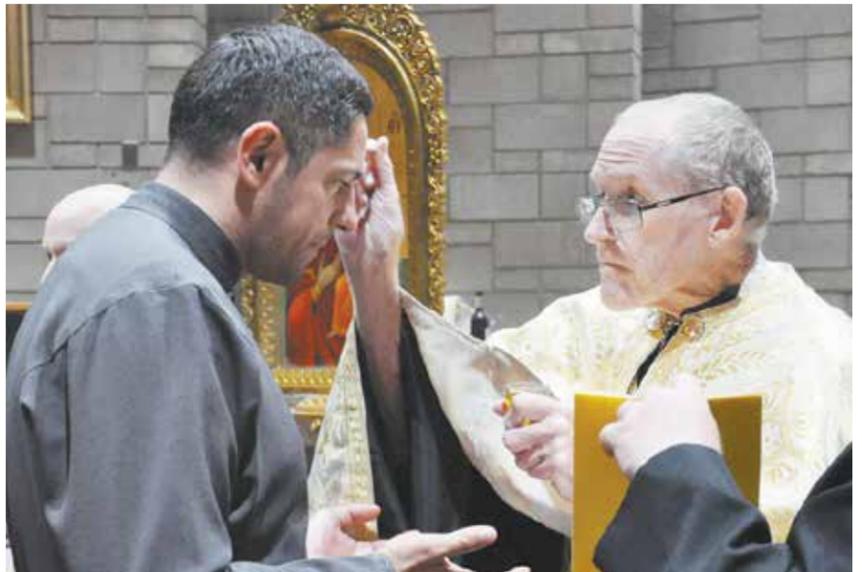
On Tuesday, Bishop Kurt celebrated the Divine Liturgy with priests celebrating milestone anniversaries of ordination to the priesthood of 30 years and less, including his own anniversary (30 years): Father Steven Galuschik (5 years), Father James Hayer (30 years), and Father Michael Kerestes. Father James Badeaux (20 years) was also present.

On Wednesday, those priests celebrating milestone anniversaries of 40 or more years celebrated the Divine Liturgy: Father Ed Semko, who preached the homily, Father John Basarab, Father James Carroll, OFM, Father John Cigan, Father Robert Evancho, and Father Gregory Noga.

Our afternoons were free – time to catch up with our brother clergy, but also time for Confession and private prayer. Several of the priests enjoy swimming in the ocean, or at least breathing the salty air. As Father Philip reminded us, it is good to relax and enjoy each others’ company as part of the retreat. We might remember that after Jesus spent the night in prayer, he selected twelve to accompany him, to go out (Luke 6) and share in his ministry, in the proclamation of the Good News.

Bishop Kurt celebrated the Anointing service with Father Conan Timoney and Father Nicholas Daddona. This long-standing custom at the priests’ retreat acknowledges that we are all in need of healing of soul and body. The prayers of this service remind us of the connection between our physical and spiritual health, the importance of leaving sin behind, and our reliance on Christ the Divine Physician to bring about a complete healing – for even when the bishop prays as the Gospel is held over those assembled, it is a prayer asking and trusting the Jesus Christ heals through his ministry.

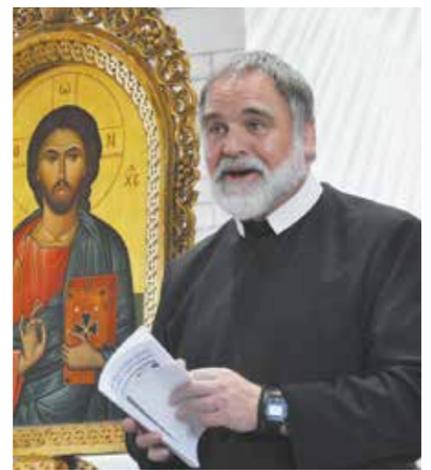
Many of us prayed especially for our brother priests who were not able to attend or who had to leave early due to retreats or health. Father Ed Higgins stayed for the retreat in spite of injuring himself in a fall in the chapel just before the retreat started.



Father Yuriy Oros celebrated the Parastas, remembering our departed clergy. Indeed, at this retreat, many of the foreign born clergy were asked to read the Epistle or to serve at prayers in English, and served well. Think about who helps out in your parish—it’s common to ask the same people to do everything each year until they depart this life. But it is refreshing to see new

faces being asked and willing to help out on our retreat.

On behalf of all the priests, I ask that you please pray for us as we pray for you: for our health, for our ministry, and that we remain united with each other and with you in Christ Jesus our Lord.





PEOPLE YOU KNOW AROUND THE EPARCHY

IN FORT MILL...

HAPPY 5TH ANNIVERSARY OF ORDINATION FATHER STEVEN!

The Byzantine Catholic Community in Fort Mill, SC (greater Charlotte, NC), honored Father Steven Galuschik with a potluck dinner on September 21st in celebration of his fifth anniversary of ordination. For the past two years, Father Steven has faithfully served the Byzantine Catholic Community in the Greater Charlotte, NC, area. He travels every week from All Saints Byzantine Catholic Church in North Ft. Myers, FL, to celebrate the Divine Liturgy on Saturday at 4:00 PM at the Ministry Center at Saint Philip Neri Catholic Church in Ft. Mill, SC.. *Na mnohaja i blahaja l'ita!*



IN TRENTON & ROEBLING...

Assumption of the Virgin Mary and Saint Nicholas Church Picnic

Parishioners from Assumption of the Virgin Mary, Trenton, NJ, and Saint Nicholas, Roebling, NJ enjoyed fellowship, food, games and music on Sunday, September 15, 2019.

After a bit of rain in the early morning, the 130+ parishioners enjoyed the warm sunshine and the shady trees at the CYO Camp in Hamilton, NJ. Father Yuriy Oros welcomed everyone and thanked the picnic committee for organizing a wonderful outing. After offering a blessing and prayer, everyone enjoyed traditional picnic goodies from a local caterer and ice cream and ice treats from a local food truck. The Roebling parish arranged to have one of their parishioners prepare bacon bread for all.

The children had lots of fun playing games indoors and outdoors. They were rewarded for their energetic, enthusiastic competition with treats and surprises. The music kept everyone moving and a few were even dancing between the tables.

Everyone agreed this was a wonderful way to visit with family and friends! Everyone is looking forward to next year!



IN CARY...

Saints Cyril and Methodius Parishioners Celebrate Picnic

Parishioners of Saints Cyril and Methodius Byzantine Catholic Church in Cary, NC, met at Marla Dorrel Park after Divine Liturgy on the last day of summer for a welcome get-together. Faces new and old got better acquainted over pot-luck dishes, coffee, and cold drinks. Children climbed on the play structures and enjoyed the swings while adults introduced themselves and found out who's who in a variety of parish roles. New members, including young adults, families, and retirees, as well as established parishioners filled out registration forms and catechism surveys. With a list of parish and eparchial resources and information on our upcoming fundraiser, men's retreat, and feast days, parishioners are off to a great start in the new liturgical year! Father Mark Shuey is the administrator of Saints Cyril and Methodius Parish.



EPIPHANY LADIES GUILD CELEBRATES 50 YEARS!

Annandale, Virginia

By the end of the 1960s, the Washington, DC area had in many ways become the epicenter of counter-cultural protest. The scene of both race riots and sometimes violent anti-war protests, the nation's capital area had also witnessed a relatively recent influx of new residents from the Northeast and the Byzantine Catholics among them yearned for the stability offered by their faith and the culture they'd left behind.

So when, in September 1968, Bishop Stephen Kocisko approved a Byzantine Catholic Mission in Annandale, Virginia and gave prospective parishioners nine months to demonstrate the need and strength of the Byzantine Catholic community in this Northern Virginia outpost, dozens of the new residents

leapt on the opportunity to create a "counter-counter-culture."

Leading the way were the young Byzantine Catholic wives and mothers. On February 9, 1969 the ladies of that prospective church formed an Epiphany Ladies Guild (ELG), becoming the first apostolate – three years before establishment of the church in 1972. This dedicated, visionary (and hard-working!) group of women wasted no time in putting their talents to work.

Mrs. LaDonna Rodock became the first sacristan, bringing the liturgical furnishings (and the coffee pot!) from her home every Sunday to the auditorium of Luther Jackson Middle School. Kay Kopack sewed altar vestments. ELG Moms whose sons were



Epiphany Ladies Guild in 1969

altar servers laundered the vestments. A Beautification Committee (Carol Gubanich, Amelia Bordas, Kay Kopack, Carol Kosco, Monica Koshuta, Carmella Rapavi, Joan Ryaback and LaDonna Rodock) ensured the temporary church was decorated for religious holidays.

Mary Frissora, with help from Kay Burcin and Monica Koshuta, baked the prospora, passing the task on to Mary Gaydos for 37 years, who then passed it on to Mary Sue Kotula (three Marys!) Mirovanije bread for holydays was baked over the years by Barbara Bodnar, Monica Koshuta, Daria Parrell and Helen Wegman.

When the church property was purchased, ELG members worked to furnish the existing home so it could become a rectory. To raise funds for a new church, the ELG sold candy and

was a featured participant at the Tysons Corner Fall Festival, selling ethnic baked goods at the festival and at local supermarkets. They play a major role in Epiphany's Slavic American Festival and organize and run weekly Lenten Dinners for thousands of Northern Virginians for whom pierogis remain an exotic food item.

Five decades have passed since that determined band of women first gathered with such purpose. And while marriage and new arrivals from throughout the country – many in our nation's military – means Epiphany of Our Lord has become more diverse, on October 6, they and their successors took a break from their labors to celebrate their success in building not only a church but a parish community.



Epiphany Ladies Guild in 2019

FATHER FRANCIS TWARDZIK, SDB, CELEBRATES 60 YEARS AS SALESIAN

By Father Michael Mendl, SDB, New Rochelle, N.Y. - October 10

Father Francis "Frank" M. Twardzik, SDB, was among 20 Salesians of Don Bosco who celebrated jubilees of 25, 40, 50, or 60 years of religious profession and/or priestly ordination at the Marian Shrine in Haverstraw, N.Y., on September 21.

Father Twardzik, a native of Springfield, Mass., made his first profession of vows on September 8, 1959, in Newton, N.J.

He is currently assigned to the Don Bosco Residence in Orange, N.J., a house of formation for men discerning a possible Salesian vocation and for the most recently professed Salesian brothers as they continue their studies after novitiate.

Father Twardzik's chief responsibilities within the community are being part of the formation team assisting the young men, in particular serving as the community's confessor. In addition, he is chaplain and confessor for the Salesian Sisters' community at Haledon, N.J.

Father Twardzik finds most significant about his Salesian and priestly vocation that it "allows me to help the young and adults to know the Lord and how to live Jesus toward our common vocation to become saints—Salesian style!"

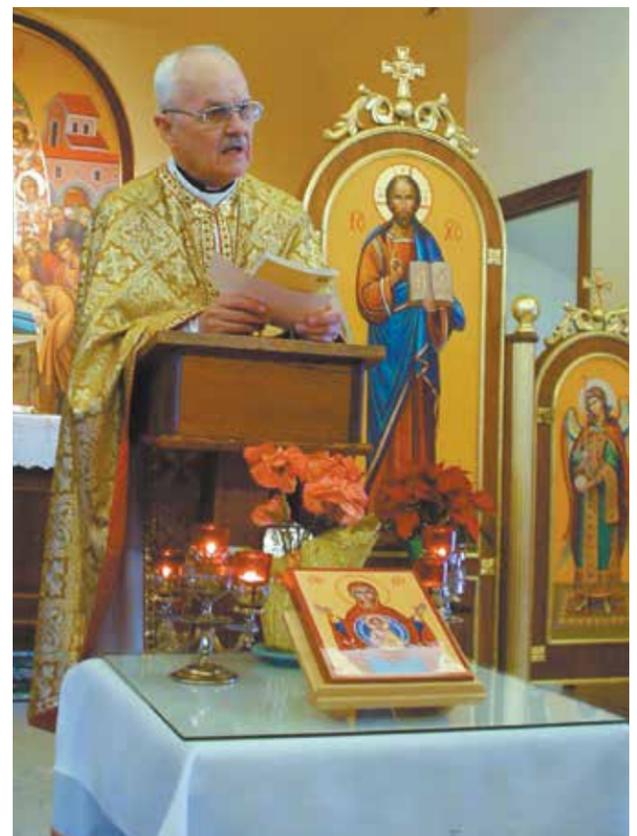
Of the 20 men, 14 were able to take part in the celebration, joined by many members of the Salesian Family, the families of the jubilarians, alumni, parishioners, and other friends of the Salesians. The other 6 were prevented by poor health, distance, or pastoral duties.

Father Timothy Zak, SDB, provincial of the province of the Eastern United States and Canada, presided and preached.

The other jubilarians were Father Frank Kelly, Brother Richard Pasaik, and Father Jeremiah Reen, 60 years professed; Fathers John Janko, David Moreno, Thomas Pallithanam, Kenneth Shaw, John Thompson, and Lawrence Urban, 50 years professed; Father

Robert Gagne, 50 years ordained; Fathers Richard Alejunas, Paul Chuong Nguyen, Richard Putnam, and David Sajdak, 40 years professed; Fathers Pallithanam and Thompson, 40 years ordained; Brother Thomas Dion and Father Louis Kopnopski, 25 years professed; and Fathers Joseph Lee, Zbigniew Majcher, and Jan Staszal, 25 years ordained.

A banquet followed at Patriot Hills in Stony Point, N.J.



Father Twardzik preaching at The Divine Liturgy during a Salesian day of recollection in 2009

EASTERN CATHOLIC LIFE (USPS 165-600) (ISSN 0894-9786)

Official Publication of the
Byzantine Catholic Eparchy of Passaic

Subscription Rate: \$15.00 per year.

News and Photo Services:
Member of the Catholic Press Association of America.

Published monthly by the
Eastern Catholic Press Association

445 Lackawanna Avenue
Woodland Park, NJ 07424
Phone: 973-890-7777 Fax: 973-890-7175

Postage paid at Little Falls, NJ, and additional office at Bellmawr, NJ.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to:
Eastern Catholic Life

445 Lackawanna Avenue
Woodland Park, NJ 07424

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Eparchial Website:

www.EparchyofPassaic.com

ANNUAL CIRCULATION REPORT

UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE® (All Periodicals Publications Except Requester Publications)
Statement of Ownership, Management, and Circulation

1. Publication Title Eastern Catholic Life		2. Publication Number 1 6 5 - 6 0 0		3. Filing Date 09/25/2019	
4. Issue Frequency Monthly		5. Number of Issues Published Annually 12		6. Annual Subscription Price 15.00	
7. Complete Mailing Address of Known Office of Publication (Not printer) (Street, city, county, state, and ZIP+4®) Eastern Catholic Life - 445 Lackawanna Avenue, Woodland Park, NJ 07424					
8. Complete Mailing Address of Headquarters or General Business Office of Publisher (Not printer) Byzantine Catholic Eparchy of Passaic 445 Lackawanna Avenue, Woodland Park, NJ 07424					
9. Full Names and Complete Mailing Addresses of Publisher, Editor, and Managing Editor (Do not leave blank)					
Publisher (Name and complete mailing address) Kurt Burnette - Byzantine Catholic Eparchy of Passaic 445 Lackawanna Avenue, Woodland Park, NJ 07424					
Editor (Name and complete mailing address) Reverend James Badeaux 445 Lackawanna Avenue, Woodland Park, NJ 07424					
Managing Editor (Name and complete mailing address) Reverend Ronald Hatton 445 Lackawanna Avenue, Woodland Park, NJ 07424					
10. Owner (Do not leave blank. If the publication is owned by a corporation, give the name and address of the corporation immediately followed by the names and addresses of all stockholders owning or holding 1 percent or more of the total amount of stock. If not owned by a corporation, give the names and addresses of the individual owners. If owned by a partnership or other unincorporated firm, give its name and address as well as those of each individual owner. If the publication is published by a nonprofit organization, give its name and address.)					
Full Name Byzantine Catholic Eparchy of Passaic		Complete Mailing Address 445 Lackawanna Avenue, Woodland Park, NJ 07424			
13. Publication Title Eastern Catholic Life		14. Issue Date for Circulation Data Below			
15. Extent and Nature of Circulation					
Official Publication of the Eparchy of Passaic		Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months		No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date	
a. Total Number of Copies (Net press run)		5018		5018	
b. Paid Circulation (By Mail and Outside the Mail)		4941		4941	
(1) Mailed Outside-County Paid Subscriptions Stated on PS Form 3541 (Include paid distribution above nominal rate, advertiser's proof copies, and exchange copies)		4941		4941	
(2) Mailed In-County Paid Subscriptions Stated on PS Form 3541 (Include paid distribution above nominal rate, advertiser's proof copies, and exchange copies)		0		0	
(3) Paid Distribution Outside the Mails Including Sales Through Dealers and Carriers, Street Vendors, Counter Sales, and Other Paid Distribution Outside USPS®		0		0	
(4) Paid Distribution by Other Classes of Mail Through the USPS (e.g., First-Class Mail®)		0		0	
c. Total Paid Distribution (Sum of 15b (1), (2), (3), and (4))		4941		4941	
d. Free or Nominal Rate Distribution (By Mail and Outside the Mail)		77		77	
(1) Free or Nominal Rate Outside-County Copies included on PS Form 3541		77		77	
(2) Free or Nominal Rate In-County Copies included on PS Form 3541		0		0	
(3) Free or Nominal Rate Copies Mailed at Other Classes Through the USPS (e.g., First-Class Mail)		0		0	
(4) Free or Nominal Rate Distribution Outside the Mail (Carriers or other means)		0		0	
e. Total Free or Nominal Rate Distribution (Sum of 15d (1), (2), (3) and (4))		77		77	
f. Total Distribution (Sum of 15c and 15e)		5018		5108	
g. Copies not Distributed (See Instructions to Publishers #4 (page #3))		98%			
h. Total (Sum of 15f and g)					
i. Percent Paid (15c divided by 15f times 100)		98		98%	
* If you are claiming electronic copies, go to line 16 on page 3. If you are not claiming electronic copies, skip to line 17 on page 3.					
16. Electronic Copy Circulation		Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months		No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date	
a. Paid Electronic Copies		0		0	
b. Total Paid Print Copies (Line 15c) + Paid Electronic Copies (Line 16a)		4941		4941	
c. Total Print Distribution (Line 15f) + Paid Electronic Copies (Line 16a)		5018		5018	
d. Percent Paid (Both Print & Electronic Copies) (16b divided by 16c x 100)		98%		98%	
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18. Signature and Title of Editor, Publisher, Business Manager, or Owner Kurt Burnette - Publisher				Date 9-25-2019	
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2019 TRIENNIAL NATIONAL COLLECTION For the Archdiocese for the Military Services

By Mary Lavin

Article and images appear courtesy of the Archdiocese for the Military Services

Dear friends, the bishops of the United States have many national collections, more than there are Sundays in the year. We only participate in a very few of them. The Military Archdiocese is allowed to take its collection only once every three years. I ask you to support this one collection. An enormous number of our soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines are Catholic with very few priests. I am happy that our Eparchy was able to supply a full-time chaplain recently, and especially that our church pulled together to support his parish while he was away. Our presidents come and go, and we don't always agree with their decisions, but the men and women who give their lives in the military continue to serve our republic faithfully and selflessly. Please support this collection, and please pray for our Commander in Chief. + Bishop Kurt

The next National Collection for the AMS, approved by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops to be taken every three years, is scheduled for the weekend of 9-10 November 2019. The 2019 Triennial National Collection is a critically important opportunity to increase awareness about the AMS, the faithful it serves, and to seek financial support for the same.

You know that the AMS is a separate U.S. diocese while many Catholics do not. The AMS continues to work diligently to make known that its mission is global and that it is responsible for the pastoral care of Catholic men and women – and their families – who hail from all U.S. dioceses while they serve, have served, or prepare to serve our Country. Whether on a military installation, in a Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center, or on the campus of one of the five U.S. Military Academies, these men, women, and children are members of your own diocese or parish who would not otherwise have the opportunity to receive the sacraments, counsel from a priest, evangelization and catechesis, participate in young adult ministry programs, or simply receive a copy of a sacramental record.

Funds received from the first two National Collections for the AMS in 2013 and 2016 made possible several new and important initiatives, including the widespread certification of catechists at

military installations around the world. They also ensured that the AMS could continue to underwrite the AMS Co-Sponsored Seminarian Program, the only vocations program in the U.S. that provides priests who will serve in their home diocese before and after their service as a Military Chaplain. AMS co-sponsored priests will likely serve more years in their home diocese than they will on active-duty. Finally, the funds received enabled initial steps to be taken towards the building of an endowment with the goal of one day creating a self-sustaining source of funding.

Ninety-five percent of all gifts received by the AMS are from individuals; no funding is received from the Government or the Military. After 18 years of war, with no end in sight, constant transition and increasing uncertainty for Catholic military families, please help the spread awareness about the 2019 Triennial National Collection so that the AMS is not only able to continue its mission but is able to further its reach and impact.

Unlike a territorial diocese, it is forbidden that a percentage of the collections taken up in chapels on military installations be automatically given to the AMS; however, AMS faithful will also have the opportunity to participate by making individual gifts.

EASTERN CATHOLIC RADIO

by Father Francis Rella

Eastern Catholic Radio is celebrating Eastern Christianity and all things Catholic!

Eastern Catholic Radio is a 24/7 internet radio station broadcast through Live365.com. Our programming consists of continuous Eastern Christian Church music and selections from Western Christianity. We also broadcast daily prayers, church services, sermons, podcasts, inspirational talk radio, and lectures. Lecture series produced by OLV and Eastern Christian Publications are heard daily as well as "Light of the East," featuring Father Thomas Loya.

Eastern Catholic Radio is a production of Eastern Catholic Broadcasting, a media Apostolate affiliated with the Byzantine Catholic Eparchy of Passaic. With the permission of Bishop Kurt Burnette, the apostolate was founded in 2014 at Saint Joseph Byzantine Catholic Church in New Brunswick, NJ, and Saints Peter and Paul Byzantine Catholic Church in Somerset, NJ, by Father Francis Rella. The ministry began as weekly broadcasts of the Sunday Divine Liturgy and the production of multiple videos for the Eparchy, including a full-length documentary entitled "A Time for Living." The media ministry continues with funding from Our Lady of



EASTERN CATHOLIC RADIO

Celebrating Eastern Christianity and all things Catholic

Perpetual Help Parish in Toms River, NJ, and private donations. For the past 10 months, Eastern Catholic Radio has beta-tested the station, without any formal advertising and publicity. So far, over 250,000 listeners have tuned in to Eastern Catholic Radio from around the world.

The easiest way to listen to Eastern Catholic Radio is through the free Live365 app. or on your computer or smartphone at www.easterncatholic-broadcasting.com or Live365.com.

September 2019

GLORY TO JESUS CHRIST!

Dear Friends AND Fellow Pilgrims,

How can we not be filled with joy after experiencing the peace and blessings of our 85th Pilgrimage in honor of Our Lady of Perpetual Help!

Each pilgrimage is like a wonderful concert. It begins as a single “note” as we meet to determine the theme of the pilgrimage. During the following weeks and months, additional “notes” are added, creating the melody of celebrants, homilists, programs and speakers. Come spring, the working “musicians” come to add their touch by cleaning, weeding, planting, organizing, ordering, and preparing the welcoming notes of hospitality in a spirit of service.

It all comes together with the arrival of our pilgrims from toddlers to teenagers, from young adults to seasoned seniors. They all add their blend of prayers and praise, petitions and needs. Finally, the spiritual concert rises from the prayerful grounds of Mount Saint Macrina to the ears of Our Lord and his dear Mother, Cause of our Joy.

Thank you, sincerely, for being a part of this special “concert.” May its beautiful strains continue to echo within you throughout this coming year. Be assured that a daily prayerful “refrain” will be offered for you rising from the hearts of all of us, the Sisters of Saint Basil. We will await your return for the 86th pilgrimage that will include a celebration of our century of service to the Byzantine Catholic Church.

With our love, prayers, and gratitude,

Sister Ruth Plante, O.S.B.M.

Sister Ruth Plante, Provincial and the Sisters of Saint Basil



EARN YOUR MASTER'S DEGREE IN THEOLOGY WITH THE BYZANTINE CATHOLIC SEMINARY

The Byzantine Catholic Seminary of Saints Cyril and Methodius in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania is celebrating a semester of accomplishments. This fall, we are pleased to welcome Seminary board member and our 2017 Master of Arts in Theology (M.A.T.) graduate Helenanne Hochendoner to our slate of on-line instructors for the M.A.T. program. Ms. Hochendoner is teaching Introduction to Sacred Scripture, one of the required courses for the M.A.T. degree.

This fall has also seen the largest online course enrollment to date, with an average of eight students per class. Also, owing to our cooperative agreement with the Washington Theological Consortium, we have two students from member schools outside of Pittsburgh—both from United Lutheran Seminary in Gettysburg.



For those who are interested, our slate of online classes for Spring 2020 includes:

- DT100: Introduction to Dogmatics
- DT101: Patristics 1
- SP101: Foundations of Spirituality 1

Registration is open through the 1st of December, and online courses begin Monday, January 13, 2020. For more information, visit <https://www.bcs.edu/byzantine-online-course-descriptions/>.

The Byzantine Catholic Seminary is a community of mentors, teachers, and students forming leaders for the Church in an environment of Christian unity, integrity, and missionary spirit with a commitment to ecumenism. Founded in 1950, the Byzantine Catholic Seminary is a free-standing, English speaking theological seminary, welcoming all those seeking the knowledge possessed by the Eastern ecclesial traditions.

The Seminary is authorized to grant graduate degrees by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and accredited by the Commission on Accrediting of the Association of Theological Schools. The Seminary 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.

If you would like more information about this topic, please call the Seminary Office at 412-321-8383 or email at office@bcs.edu.

When traveling to the South, 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
1-786-320-5125

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



LIFE, LOVE, AND THE HUMAN PERSON

By Ann M. Koshute, MTS

THE FREE LIBRARY OF FAITH

There is a phenomenon that I thought unique to the neighborhoods of my small Central Pennsylvania town, but which I've learned actually began ten years ago in Wisconsin: the neighborhood free library. Perhaps you've seen these "pop-up" book exchanges in your own town on front lawns or community parks. Many of them are elaborately and creatively constructed, looking like over-sized birdhouses with a window on the door so that the contents inside are clearly visible. The idea is that this miniature library is filled with books that anyone passing by while on a stroll through the neighborhood can browse, choose one to take home and read. In theory, then, the book is returned later, or perhaps replaced with another book the borrower would like to share. It's a lovely idea which promotes reading (an almost quaint practice in this age of scrolling social media feeds and deciphering messages written in "text-speak"), spurs intellectual curiosity, and connects us with people in our community. It also sparks creativity in designing these tiny *bibliothèques*, offering some activity beyond watching television or spending hours on the internet. Some of the lawn libraries I've seen are artistic and architectural wonders, allowing for the homeowner to create something aesthetically pleasing that will also catch the eye of potential readers.

Riding and walking around neighborhoods where these little free libraries are increasingly found I thought about how our personal faith and devotion to God can benefit from being shaped by this phenomenon. We certainly must cultivate an intimate, personal relationship with God. He is not the distant watchmaker who "winds us up" and then lets us run on our own. Nor is He a divine puppet master who rules our every thought and action. God is a loving Father whose ultimate desire for us is eternal union with Him. Until that time, we are pilgrims on this earth, striving to live in virtue, hope and freedom from sin. God has visited us in the most remarkable way, through the Incarnation of His Son. Jesus makes present to us, in the most personal and concrete way, the love of the Father through the example of His life and preaching, through the marvelous works He accomplished, in His death and resurrection, and most concretely of all, in the Holy Mysteries He gave us. These Mysteries (the Sacraments) are personal encounters with the living God, instituted by Christ, made possible through the action of the Holy Spirit, and given to us as a means of communing with God, receiving His forgiveness, and drawing us closer to Him and each other. We *know* all of this by faith; we *live* it by the grace of God. But do we *share* it?

Saint John Chrysostom wrote prolifically about marriage and creating a *domestic church*, and how belief in Christ and our liturgical celebrations must not simply intersect occasionally but be interwoven with each other. Taken to its natural end in our day, Faith and Liturgy must not be "activities" we do in between the real and more important aspects of life. Prayer, worship, feasting and fasting all must accompany us to work, to the voting booth, through daily activities and in our homes among family, friends and guests. This is true for Christians who are or single or married; with or without children; young or not-so-young. The breath of our lives should be in rhythm with the breath of the Spirit, received by us in the Holy Mysteries and infused in us again and again in the Divine Liturgy and the liturgical seasons. What this means for us is that the Christian life is

one of faith and witness. We must first be concerned with the state of our own souls (lest we be overly confident of our salvation, or become judgmental of others'), then turn our attention to the good of our neighbor. If we have the Good News, why would we keep it to ourselves?

In many of his homilies, Chrysostom exhorts us to read Scripture, and specifically to meditate on the Epistle and Gospel we hear at the Liturgy. Contemplation, however, shouldn't end with us, but is meant to bear fruit in our witness, and in our *instructing* others: "I wish and pray that you would all hold fast to right order as teachers, that you would not simply be listeners to what is said by us but also transmit it to others..." (Homily 8 on Genesis). Saint John further emphasizes our duty to live rightly, learn the Faith and share the

Good News: "God, you know, does not wish Christians to be concerned only for themselves but also to edify others, not simply through their teaching but *also through their lifestyle and the way they live it*; after all, nothing is such an attraction to the way of truth as probity of life—in other words, people pay less attention to what we say than to what we do."

I'd like to think that Chrysostom would approve of the pop-up lending libraries in our communities, and that he'd find them to be useful analogies for our faith and how we live it and extend it to others. I imagine him admiring these small architectural wonders, creatively and beautifully adorned, housing literary works for our education and edification (although I'm quite sure there are many titles in lawn and real libraries of which he would vehe-

The Seasons of Infertility

A RETREAT FOR WOMEN

Presented by: The Springs in the Desert Ministry Team

Saturday, December 7, 2019
8:30am-5:30pm

Infertility affects every woman and marriage differently. While each of our stories is unique to us, there is a shared experience of loss, isolation, self-doubt, testing of faith, and pain in our marriages.

But God transforms our grief and loss into a fruitful expression of His love when we shoulder each other's burdens. Join us for a day of talks, personal prayer/reflection and community as we walk together through the seasons of infertility.

Please look for more details at <https://springsinthedesert.org/the-seasons-of-infertility>



Springs in the Desert is a Catholic ministry devoted to helping women and couples struggling with infertility to process and move beyond their grief to find the fruitfulness God has planned for their marriage. We hope our Springs in the Desert community can provide refreshment for your soul as you find others who share in your same suffering. Instead of suffering the additional pain of isolation, please know there is a place where others can identify with your struggle, providing solace and solidarity. You are not alone. You are not meant to bear this Cross on your own. Learn more at www.springsinthedesert.org

Mother Boniface Spirituality Center welcomes groups and individuals of all faiths to our spacious and fully equipped facility and grounds located in Northeast Philadelphia. We offer a variety of retreats, speakers and programming in addition to hosting groups for retreats, meetings, and times of renewal. Learn more at WWW.MSBT.ORG/MBSC



"Remember not the former things, nor consider the things of old. Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert." - Isaiah 43:18-19



Registration: Seasons of Infertility—December 7, 2019

Name: _____
 Address: _____
 City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
 Phone: _____
 Email: _____

Please return registration with \$30.00 registration fee to Mother Boniface Spirituality Center. Checks payable to MSBT. If you have any questions, please contact us at MBCRetreat@msbt.org or 267-350-1831.

mently disapprove!) Perhaps Saint John would instruct us to not be concerned about the beauty of what is on the outside, but more concerned with the knowledge and belief contained within. We are like those libraries dotting lawns in our neighborhoods, but what makes us attractive is not physical beauty, expensive clothes or an air of charm. The light of Christ enlivens our expression, infusing us with a joy that is not sentimental or “over-the-top,” but displays our total trust in Him and a desire to share that joy with those whom we encounter. The volumes contained within are written in our hearts and on our souls by God’s grace, and our cooperation with it. This library inside of us grows with every prayer, every en-

counter with God in His Mysteries, every Liturgy and every moment that we stand in His presence. Perhaps Saint John would instruct us to maintain our library by adding to the collection, caring for each volume so that it is not subject to wear or destruction. If we do all of this, carefully filling the library of our souls with God’s Word and the grace He freely offers, I’m confident of what Saint John would finally instruct us: walk through all the neighborhoods of your life carrying the Faith. But remember that unlike a library, the faith in us is not meant to be loaned out but shared freely and generously. **ECL**



Visiting New York City? Come Worship With Us!

Saint Mary Byzantine Catholic Church
Father Edward G. Cimbala, D.Min.—Pastor

246 East 15th Street, Manhattan, New York
212-677-0516

Sunday Divine Liturgy

10:00 AM

6:00 PM



SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES

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

HEROD(S) THE FOOL(S)

False gods and tyrannical leaders, two categories with a lot in common, are roundly mocked in the Bible. There’s King Balak (Numbers 22-24), Kings Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar (Daniel 1-6) and, of course, the hard-hearted Pharaoh of Exodus (1-15). Five different rulers in the New Testament share the dynastic name “Herod.” The Akathist Hymn (stanza 10) rhymes that name (*Irodes* in Greek) with the word for “fool” (*lirodes*), which sums them up nicely.

The first Herod, a Jew of mixed background, obtained the title “King of Judea” from the Roman Senate and became known as “the Great” for his lavish reconstruction of the Jerusalem Temple. The Gospel describes how he was duped by the Magi and slaughtered the innocent baby boys around Bethlehem for fear of losing his kingship to the “newborn King of the Jews” (Matthew 2). Contemporary historians tell us that this same fear led him to kill his first wife, his brother-in-law, three of his own sons, 300 military leaders, two rabbis and forty of their students.

Herod the Great’s kingdom was divided among his heirs, none of whom were called “King of the Jews/Judea”

until well after Jesus’s Ascension to heaven in glory. Judea went to the incompetent Herod Archelaus, who was replaced after only two years by a series of Roman governors, among them Pontius Pilate. St Joseph and his guiding angel wisely chose to avoid Archelaus’ territory when the Holy Family returned from Egypt (Matthew 2:22-23). Jesus’ parable about a nobleman who went off to a distant land to receive a kingdom and slaughtered all those who opposed his rule (Luke 19) is probably based on Archelaus’ career. Archelaus did travel to Rome to confirm his title and killed 3000 protesters in the Temple upon his return.

Herod Antipas, who inherited rule over Galilee, appears in the Gospels as a superstitious and conflicted weakling. St John the Baptist condemned him for marrying Herodias, his brother Philip’s ex-wife. Weak and conflicted, Herod imprisoned John to silence him but still liked to listen to him preach. The Gospel recounts in gruesome detail how Herodias took advantage of Herod’s drunken lust and her daughter Salome’s gullibility to trick Herod into having John beheaded and his head presented on a platter (Mark 6:16-29). It is this same Herod who was said to be “look-

ing for Jesus” (without success; Luke 13:31-32) and to whom Pilate sent Jesus during His trial. Disappointed that Jesus worked no miracles for him, Herod sent Jesus back without judgment (Luke 23:6-12). The first Christians (Acts 4:27-28) saw this collusion between Pilate and Herod predicted in Psalm 2 (vv. 1-2): “Why did the nations rage and the people plot vain things? ... the rulers were gathered together against the Lord and His Christ.”

Herod Agrippa I regained the title of “King” from the perverse Emperor Claudius in 41AD and ruled over a large portion of the Holy Land. He persecuted the Church in Jerusalem, killed Saint James, son of Zebedee, and imprisoned St Peter (Acts 12:1-4). He came to a shameful end. When he appeared before the people of Tyre and Sidon in all his royal finery, they flattered him by shouting, “The voice of a god, not of a mortal!” Instead of deflecting the glory to God, proud King Herod reveled in this blasphemy. He was struck down by sudden illness and consumed by worms (Acts 12:20-23).

Saint Paul faced King Herod Agrippa II as a prisoner of the Roman governor Festus (58AD). Paul recounted

his conversion and shared the good news with Agrippa, who brushed him off with a joke but also pronounced him innocent of crime (Acts 25:13 – 26:32). Saint Luke delicately overlooks Agrippa’s incestuous relationship with his sister Berenice. Agrippa was driven out of Jerusalem by the Jews at the start of the wars that led to the destruction of the city (70AD).

If all this sounds like today’s headlines or your favorite Netflix show, it only proves that pride, paranoia, violence, immoderation, and sexual misconduct have always been temptations, especially for the powerful. Psalm 146 (vv. 3-5) warns us “Put no trust in princes, in mortal man who cannot save. His breath goes forth, he returns to the earth and his plans for that day come to nothing. In every Liturgy, we obey Saint Paul’s command to offer prayers “for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence” (1 Timothy 2:1-2). Perhaps the best prayer is the one offered in the Liturgy of Saint Basil: “Preserve the virtuous in virtue and make those who are evil good.” **ECL**

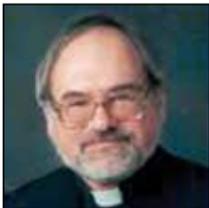


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THE BYZANTINE LITURGY

By Archpriest David Petras, SEOD

THE ANAPHORA: THE MYSTERY OF GOD'S PRESENCE

The most solemn moment of the Anaphora is when the priest repeats the Lord's words, "This is my body, This is my blood." Saint John Chrysostom explained the meaning of this mystery. He preached, "It is not man that converts the holy gifts into the Body and Blood of Christ, but Christ himself, who gave himself to be crucified. The priest, who utters these words, is only an image of Christ, but the power and grace are from God. He says: 'This is my body.' These words change the sacrificial elements. Just as the words: 'Increase and multiply and fill the earth' (Gen 1:28), although spoken once, give our nature the permanent power of procreation, so also these words once pronounced, are effective on all the altars from that time until now and will be to his second coming." (First Homily on the Betrayal of Judas, 6) Chrysostom is not talking about the words that the priest repeats. He is speaking about the words that Christ said, and which echo or reverberate throughout time to effect the change in a manner similar to creation. According to Chrysostom, the priest "stands in the place of Christ," when he says these words, for the presbyter obviously does not mean that the bread is his body, but the body of Christ. Chrysostom, therefore, is not referring to the words of the priest actually pronounced in the Liturgy, but to the words said by Christ at the mystical supper.

In Byzantine theology, the priest is a passive instrument of God. This is why all sacramental formulas are passive (e.g., "The servant of God is baptized..."). In Chrysostom's time, the question of the exact moment when the gifts changed had not been asked. What was important was the reality of the mystery of faith. For the fathers, therefore, when the eucharistic prayer had been said, the bread and wine had become the real body and blood of Christ.

The Divine Liturgy is the reality of the Gospel of Saint John. Here Jesus teaches us, "I am the living

bread that came down from heaven; whoever eats this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give is my flesh for the life of the world".... Jesus said to them, "Amen, amen, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you do not have life within you. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him on the last day. For my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink." (John 6:51-55) We pray before Holy Communion, "I also believe and profess that this, which I am about to receive, is truly your most precious body and your life-giving blood, which, I pray, make me worthy to receive for the remission of all my sins and for life everlasting." The Eucharist, therefore, is not only real food for our bodies but also for our souls, which is why frequent reception of this holy mystery is so important.

The priest, therefore, stands before the Holy Table to lead the community in the prayer of the anaphora. The anaphora is the central prayer of the Divine Liturgy, called "divine" because the words spoken in it come from the presence of God with us, praying together with us. This can only be done in the Holy Spirit, who is given to the priest in his ordination so that he may lead us in prayer. This is especially true in the words of our Lord instituting the holy mystery of the Eucharist, revealing that "this is my body," and "this is my blood." For the priest does not say that the bread and wine become his – the priest's – body and blood but the body and blood of Christ, who acts eternally in the eucharistic prayer of our divine Liturgy. To these words, we all say "Amen," "would that this be so."

Sometimes the people who gather to pray may have a wrong idea, that the Liturgy is the sacrifice offered by the priest, in which they have only a passive role, or that it is a mystery that the laity only watch, while the priest offers the sacrifice of praise, which by God's

grace is united as one with the true sacrifice of our Lord on the Cross and in the holy resurrection. However, the priest, by the grace of ordination, says the words which are offered by the whole assembly gathered for prayer. That is why the priest does not say, "I thank you for this liturgy," but "we thank you for this liturgy." Saint John Chrysostom explains this with his usual eloquence: "One sees that the people contribute much to the prayer...during the fearful mysteries, the priest speaks for the people, and the people speak on behalf of the priest, as can be seen from these words, 'And with your spirit.' The prayer of thanksgiving is again a common prayer offered by the priest and by all the people. The priest begins, and the people join him and respond that it is just and right to praise God: this is the beginning of the thanksgiving. Why are you surprised if the people mix their voice with that of the priest? Do you not know that these holy hymns rise to the heavens, where they mixed with those of the angels, the cherubim and the heavenly powers?" (Homily on 1 Corinthians 18)

This is especially clear in the "Amen" that the people say to the solemn words of institution. The Fathers called the "Amen" the seal of the prayer, and here it comes in the middle of the anaphora to affirm and seal the priest's repetition of our Lord's words. This makes the sacrifice the act of all of us. It is our profession of faith that the bread and wine of the liturgy are truly the body and blood of Christ, given to us as saving food for our bodies and souls. We affirm that Christ is truly present with us, just as he was for the apostles in that first and wondrous mystical supper, and that we, as Church, are becoming the Body of Christ "for the life of the world." (John 6:51) **ECL**

God With Us ✠ ONLINE ✠

GOD WITH US ONLINE is an outreach project of the Eparchial Directors of Religious Education (ECED) and the Eastern Catholic Associates (ECA) and is dedicated to the catechetical renewal of Eastern Catholics in the United States in accord with the Church's call for a new evangelization.



UNLOCKING THE MYSTERY

An Introduction to Eastern Christian Bible Study

Joshua Mangels

Wednesdays, November 6 and 13 @ 8:00 - 9:00 p.m. ET

"We have learned the plan of our salvation from no one else other than from those through whom the gospel has come down to us. For they did at one time proclaim the gospel in public. And, at a later period, by the will of God, they handed the gospel down to us in the Scriptures-to be the 'ground and pillar of our faith.'" - St. Irenaeus the Godbearer



THE GIFT OF GOD

Preparing for the Feast of the Nativity

Rev. David Anderson

Wednesday, December 16 @ 8:00 - 9:00 p.m. ET

As the Great Feast of the Nativity of the Lord draws closer, using the prayers of the Church in this holy season as our guide, we will ponder God's gift of Himself to us, and consider how we can respond by making a gift of ourselves to Him.



BAPTIZED INTO CHRIST

The Mystery of Initiation & Identity of the People of God

Rev. Sebastian Carnazzo, PhD

Wednesdays Jan 8, 15 and 22 @ 8:00 - 9:00 p.m. ET

The celebration of baptism, chrismation and Eucharist together is not simply a practicality. These mysteries are closely connected and must be understood in light of each other. Using Scripture, Fr. Sebastian will show us how these mysteries are not just a symbol, but truly make us the People of God.

2019 ONLINE EDUCATIONAL OFFERINGS

All courses are offered as live webinars, free of charge. Register at EasternCatholic.org/Events.

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, along with bi-ritual Deacon Ron Volek are now offering weekly Divine Liturgy in the area. This community will serve the northern part of South Carolina as well as Charlotte, NC. 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 4:00 PM. If you would like to participate in anyway, or have questions please contact Ron Somich at 440.477.6389 or ron.somich@gmail.com. Please check the website for news, upcoming gatherings, and service times at <https://carolinabyzantine.com/>

**November:
2, 9, 16, 23, 30**

This month we celebrate the Feast of the holy Archangel Michael and all the Heavenly Hosts (November 8), the Entrance of the Theotokos into the Temple (November 21), as well as prepare ourselves to enter into the time of Saint Philip's Fast and the Advent season (beginning November 15).

Angels are an integral part of the Christian life. In the Eastern Churches we acknowledge their role in our daily lives, and even identify ourselves mystically with them in our liturgical life. Our lives begin with the baptismal prayer which includes the line, "During (his-her) lifetime, give (him-her) the companionship of an angel of light to rescue (him-her) from every snare lying in (his-her) path, from the encounter of the evil one, from the noon-day demon and every evil imagination" (The Rite of Christian Initiation). In our Morning Prayers there may be this prayer, which I learned during my time in seminary: "O holy Angel of Christ! In homage I come to you, my holy guardian who, since my baptism, has been assigned to me to protect my body and soul. I beseech your powerful intercession. I have often offended you by my indolence and bad habits. You are without stain in your glory, and I have often driven you away by my sins. I pray and beseech you, most holy guardian, be merciful to me, your sinful and unworthy servant. Be my defender and aid me against my enemies. Through your intercession, make me worthy to be a partaker of the kingdom of God with all the saints forever. Amen." During our Divine Liturgy, we constantly identify ourselves with the angels, who celebrate the heavenly liturgy: "Around

the throne, and on each side of the throne, are four living creatures, full of eyes in front and behind: the first living creature like a lion, the second living creature like an ox, the third living creature with a face like a human face, and the fourth living creature like a flying eagle. And the four living creatures, each of them with six wings, are full of eyes all around and inside. Day and night without ceasing they sing, 'Holy, holy, holy, the Lord God the Almighty, who was and is and is to come.'" (Rev. 4:6-8). "Let us, who mystically represent the cherubim, and sing the thrice-holy hymn to the life-creating Trinity, now set aside all earthly cares, that we may receive the King of All, invisibly escorted by angelic hosts. Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!" (The Cherubic Hymn). We acknowledge that they are worshipping with us at the priest's prayer at the Entrance with the Gospel Book: "O Lord, our Master and God, Who established orders and armies of angels and archangels for the service of your glory in heaven, make this our entrance an entrance of holy angels, concelebrating with us and glorifying Your goodness..." We even have symbolism in the liturgical role of our deacons, from the flowing of their orarion reminiscent of angels' wings, to their moving from the Holy of Holies (the Altar) to the Holy Place (the Nave), being a symbol of angels moving between heaven and

earth (cf. Gen. 28:12, John 1:51). So, angels are with us, every waking moment and while we sleep, while we worship and while we work or play. "Leaders of God's armies and ministers of divine glory, commanders of angels and guides of mortals, plead on our behalf for what we need and for great mercy, since you are the leaders of the heavenly host" (Kontakion for the Feast).

The Entrance of the Theotokos into the Temple is an historical feast. According to Tradition, the Theotokos was taken – presented – by her parents Joachim and Anna into the Jewish Temple in Jerusalem as a young girl, where she lived and served as a Temple virgin until her betrothal to Saint Joseph. One of the earliest sources of this tradition is the non-canonical *Proto-evangelion of James*, also called the *Infancy Gospel of James*. Mary was solemnly received by the temple community, which was headed by the priest Zachariah, the father of John the Baptist. She was led to the holy place to become herself the "holy of holies" of God, the living sanctuary and temple of the Divine child who was to be born in her. The Church also sees this feast as a feast which marks the end of the physical temple in Jerusalem as the dwelling place of God. Many hymns are offered for the Vespers and Matins of this feast, but I will offer only one for you here, which highlights

the glory of the Theotokos replacing the glory of the Temple: "O faithful, let us leap for joy today, singing psalms and hymns of praise in honor of Mary, His Mother, the holy Tabernacle and Ark that contained the Word Whom nothing can contain. She is offered to God as a child in a marvelous way, and Zachariah the high priest receives her with great joy, for she is the dwelling place of the Most High" (Vespers, At Psalm 40). How fitting that we celebrate this feast in the midst of the Philippian Fast as a deeper preparation for the Feast of the Nativity of our Lord. **ECL**



Icon of the Archangels Michael, Raphael, and Gabriel

SEASONAL REFLECTIONS

Father Ronald Hatton



TOUCHED BY AN ANGEL?

SCHOOL OF PRAYER

Father G. Scott Boghossian

THE SPIRIT OF PRAYER

The Bible teaches us to "pray without ceasing" (1 Thess. 5:17), to "pray always" (Lk. 21:36), and "be constantly praying" (Rm. 12:12). While it is extremely difficult, if not impossible, always to be saying prayers, it is possible to remain in an attitude or mindset of prayer at all times. To have this prayerful attitude is to have the "spirit of prayer." Fr. Lovasik writes, "the spirit of prayer is one of the most precious graces in the spiritual life – indeed the chief of all graces, the beginning and fulfillment of all good. Without the spirit of prayer your whole spiritual life is unreliable."

Thomas of Solano, the first biographer of Saint Francis of Assisi (d. 1226), says that Saint Francis was "not so much praying, as becoming totally prayer." That's an excellent description of one who has the spirit of prayer. Let us also "become totally prayer!"

Louise de Ballon (d. 1668) was a nun who reformed a monastic order called the Bernardines and founded seventeen convents in France. What was the

secret of her effectiveness? Her motto was, "Do all in the spirit of prayer."

Blessed Columba Marmion, OSB (d. 1923) describes the spirit of prayer as "a habitual disposition of soul whereby, in our troubles and discouragements, as well as in our joys and successes, our hearts turn towards Our Lady and Our Lord, as to our best friends and most intimate confidants." Dom Marmion describes the person who has the spirit of prayer as in "an atmosphere that maintains itself more and more in union with God. Prayer becomes its breath, its life; it is filled with the spirit of prayer. Prayer then becomes a state, and the soul can find its God at will, even in the midst of many occupations." When we have the spirit of prayer, prayer becomes "an atmosphere," "breath," "life," and "a state" in which we live.

How do we attain the spirit of prayer? We must pray for it! Father Michael Muller, CSSR, in his book, *Prayer: the Key to Salvation*, says that the saints acquired the spirit of prayer by praying. In other words, the more time we spend in

prayer and the more effort we expend in praying, the more we will acquire the spirit of constant prayer. The "frequent exercise" of prayer brings us the spirit of prayer. The saints used short prayers and repeated them over and over, to eventually receive the spirit of prayer. Saint Margaret of Cortona prayed the Our Father over a thousand times a day until she reached higher levels of prayer. Saint Philip Neri prayed, "O God come to my assistance, O Lord make haste to help me," (Ps. 70:1) hundreds of times a day. Saint Gertrude prayed, "not my will, but thy will be done" (Lk 22:42) three hundred and sixty-five times a day. It was through short, frequent aspirations like these that the saints received the spirit of prayer.

If we want the spirit of prayer, in addition to praying short aspirations throughout the day, we should specifically ask God for the gift of the spirit of prayer. Father Muller tells us to petition God for the spirit of prayer whenever we attend the Divine Liturgy, receive Holy Communion, or engage in other

vocal prayers. He suggests that we pray something like this: "Lord, teach me how to pray; grant me the spirit of prayer, and a great love for this holy exercise; make me often think of You, and find my greatest pleasure and happiness in conversing with You; let everything of this world become distasteful to me." Father Muller says, "the more frequently and earnestly you make these, or similar petitions, to obtain the spirit of prayer, the more you will receive of this inestimable gift of the Lord."

One way, among many, to understand the command to "pray without ceasing" is to remain united to God throughout the day in that attitude we are here calling the spirit of prayer. Once again, the spirit of prayer is "an intimate intercourse, full of love, in which the soul speaks to God, sometimes with the lips, most often from the heart, and remains intimately united to Him, despite the variety of the day's work and occupations" (Dom Marmion). The spirit of prayer is one of the greatest gifts that God can confer upon us in this life. Let us desire it and pray for it. If we do, God will give it to us, as He promised: "I will pour out upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of prayer" (Zech. 12:10). May God grant you the spirit of prayer. **ECL**



SEMINARIAN REFLECTIONS

Deacon Paul Varchola West

“THE DAYS ARE LONG, BUT THE YEARS ARE SHORT”

As my fourth and final year of seminary chugs along at a seemingly ever-increasing pace, and my time in priestly formation begins to wane, I find myself becoming more and more reflective and introspective with each passing day. As I pray, I often begin to wander into thoughts about my life over the past three or four years. Thoughts of people I have met, things I have done, places I have been, what I have learned, and how I have acted whiz through my mind as if my brain were a busy street in Midtown Manhattan at 4pm on a Friday. Oddly enough, there is one thought that pops up with alarming regularity. This thought moves at a snail's pace when compared to the rest. It likes to linger, perhaps for too long. This is the thought of the things I have not done.

Quite recently I was visiting with a very close friend and I had shared this thought with him. He most certainly could sense the worry and despondency in my voice as I shared with him that I feel in so many ways that the past four or five years of my life have not been put to good use. I shared with my friend that, in hindsight, I could have done so much more with this time in seminary. I could have written so much

more poetry and music for myself. I could have journaled with more veracity. I could have spent more time with my family. I could have rearranged my priorities a bit and perhaps not worked so hard on my academic work. I could have focused more intently on my spiritual life. The list of “could have’s” went on and on. As I poured out my regrets on my poor friend, he stopped me and said, “Paul, no. There is a time to write and a time not to write. Don’t worry about what you haven’t done and just do what you are going to do. God has brought you here, He is guiding you.” Sage advice from a wise man.

After we parted ways, my friend’s words echoed through my mind all day: “Just do what you are going to do.” The next morning, while I was praying the First Hour, things began to click. The following verses from Psalm 89 hit me like a truck!

*To your eyes a thousand years
are like yesterday, come and gone,
no more than a watch in the night.
You sweep men away like a dream,
like the grass which springs up in the
morning.
In the morning it springs up and flowers:
by evening it withers and fades.
(Psalm 89:4-6)*

As I attempted to comprehend these words, which I’ve prayed many times before, I, like the Psalmist, was awestruck at the eternity of God. God always was and always will be, yet here I am spending my few fleeting moments of life worrying about what I have not done. The Psalmist continues:

*All our days pass away in your anger.
Our life is over like a sigh.
Our years are spun out like a spider
spinning.
Our span is seventy years,
or eighty for those who are strong.
And most of these are emptiness and pain.
They pass swiftly and we are gone.
(vv. 9-10)*

Another gentle reminder of how precocious our time in this life truly is. While life most certainly is fleeting like a sigh, and yes, while the years certainly do seem to fly by, do they really need to be filled with emptiness and pain?

As Psalm 89 concludes, the tone changes quite a bit.

*In the morning, fill us with your love;
we shall exult and rejoice all our days.
Give us joy to balance our affliction
for the years when we knew misfortune.
Show forth your work to your servants;*

*let your glory shine on their children.
Let the brightness of the Lord be upon us:
give success to the works of our hands.
Give success to the work of our hands.
(vv. 14-17)*

Our days are only filled with emptiness and pain if we neglect to allow God to work through us. As we pray, “Give success to the work of our hands,” this is not for our glory, but for God’s. My thoughts should not be focused on what I could have done, but rather, what I could be doing right now to glorify God instead of wallowing in self-doubt. Which is better: to be sad that my children are growing older each and every day, or, to enjoy the wonderful little people that they are growing to be and looking forward to the next season of life? Clearly, the choice that glorifies God would be the one that celebrates life, not mourns it. Most importantly, as my friend told me in so many words, God is there to balance our afflictions with joy. We must never forget that, while we toil through seemingly endless “days at the office,” but paradoxically look back on our lives and wonder where the year went, God was with us the entire time. There is nothing empty about that! In our low moments of self-doubt, let us pray that the brightness of the Lord be upon us and that He indeed give success to the work of our hands, that we may exalt and rejoice all the days, weeks, months and years ahead as we use our very lives to glorify Almighty God. **ECL**

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

Maryland Patronage of the Mother of God

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

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

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

Patronage at Hagerstown meeting at: Saint Ann Catholic Church

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

Saint Gregory of Nyssa

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

Epiphany Mission

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

Virginia

Epiphany of our Lord

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

Ascension of our Lord

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

Our Lady of Perpetual Help

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

North Carolina

Saints Cyril and Methodius

2510 Piney Plains Road
Cary, NC 27518

Phone 919-239-4877
Web www.sscyrilmethodius.org
Sunday Divine Liturgy 10:00 am

District of Columbia

Byzantine Ruthenian Chapel Basilica of the National Shrine

400 Michigan Avenue, NE
Washington, DC 20017
Phone 202-526-8300
Web www.nationalshrine.org
No regularly scheduled Sunday Liturgy.
To reserve a date and time, priests must call the Liturgy Office and submit a current letter from their eparchy’s Safe Environment Office.

Eastern Catholic Life

Circulation Department
445 Lackawanna Avenue
Woodland Park, NJ 07424

Next Issue:
December, 2019

Copy Deadline:
November 22

The current issue of the ECL was printed at Evergreen Printing, Bellmawr, NJ, and was distributed from the U.S. Post Office via second class mailing in Bellmawr, NJ.

UPCOMING EPARCHIAL AND PARISH EVENTS

NOVEMBER, 2019

- 8 Holy Archangel Michael and All Holy Bodiless Powers of Heaven
Solemn Holy Day Chancery closed*
- 11-14 USCCB General Assembly
Baltimore, MD Bishop Kurt in attendance*
- 14 Beginning of the Christmas Fast
Begins at sundown
- 21 Entrance of the Virgin Theotokos into the Temple
Solemn Holiday

28-29 Thanksgiving Holiday
*Civic Holiday*Chancery closed*

DECEMBER, 2019

- 6 Our Holy Father Nicholas of Myra
*Solemn Holy Day*Chancery closed*

- 8 Maternity of the Holy Anna
Solemn Holy Day
- 24 Vigil Eve of Christmas
- 25 The Nativity of Our Lord
Holy Day of Obligation
- 26 Synaxis of the Virgin Theotokos
- 27 Holy Protomartyr Stephen
- 24-27 Christmas Holiday
Chancery closed
- 31 January 1 New Year’s Holiday
*Chancery closed *Happy New Year*