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## Our Commitment to Living a Life of Love - The Solemnity of Brotherly Love

Most Rev. Anthony Mikovsky, Prime Bishop

In the month of September each year the Polish National Catholic Church celebrates the Solemnity of Brotherly Love. This Solemnity which has its origins during the very early years of the formation of the P.N.C.C., reminds us never to allow a desire for revenge or to seek to harm another to overcome us, but rather to deal with all individuals with an eye towards love. The teaching is brought to us through the Gospel reading of Jesus answering a question posed by a teacher of the law and a parable which follows it.

In His interaction with this teacher of the law, Jesus gives to us what we have come to know as “The Greatest Commandment.” “There was a scholar of the law who stood up to test Him and said, ‘Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?’ Jesus said to him, ‘What is written in the law? How do you read it?’ He said in reply, ‘You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your being, with all

your strength, and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself.’” He replied to him, ‘You have answered correctly; do this and you will live.’ (Luke 10:25-28)

Now we see here a very well-known principle that is part of the teaching found throughout the Scriptures. This duty to love God can be found, very explicitly, in Deuteronomy 6:4-5; “Hear, O Israel! The Lord is our God, the Lord alone! Therefore, you shall love the Lord, your God, with your whole heart, and with your whole being, and with your whole strength.” This prayer is a part of the morning and evening prayers, “The Shema” of the Jews and, of course, this general teaching can be found in many places throughout the Scriptures. The second part of the Greatest Commandment concerning the love of neighbor is also to be found within the rules of conduct in the Law; “You shall not hate any of your kindred in your heart. Reprove your neighbor openly so that you do not incur sin because of that person. Take no revenge and cherish no grudge against your own people. You shall love your neighbor as yourself. I am the Lord.” (Leviticus 19:17-18)

So we see here that the teacher of the Law knew the Scriptures and teachings of the Jewish people very well. I am sure that the very same can be said of us as well within the Church today. We have been taught from our earliest years to love God, to worship Him and make Him the center of our lives. We have also been taught the Commandments and know that we should treat others with kindness. I would even say that for most of our wider society, even those who do not acknowledge God, still have some sense that we should treat others fairly and kindly. But

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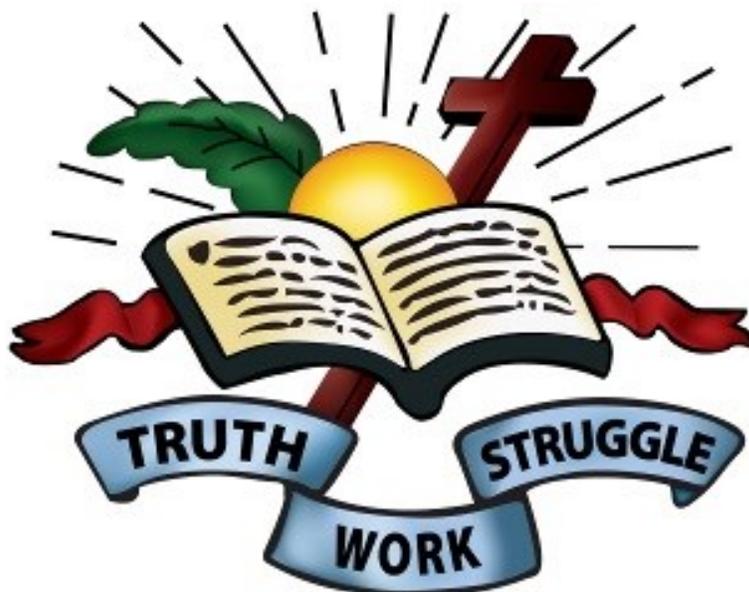
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(Our Commitment to Living a Life of Love - Continued from Page 1.)

next comes the point that Jesus is actually trying to get the teacher of the Law to come to. "Is this actually being done?"

When confronted with the idea that we actually must put the love of God and love of neighbor into action, we often find ourselves making excuses; we try to find some way to get out of what we know that we should do. We see here exactly what is happening in the rest of the Gospel scene. "But because he wished to justify himself, he said to Jesus, 'And who is my neighbor?' Jesus replied, 'A man fell victim to robbers as he went down from Jerusalem to Jericho. They stripped and beat him and went off leaving him half-dead. A priest happened to be going down that road, but when he saw him he passed by on the opposite side. Likewise a Levite came to the place, and when he saw him, he passed by on the opposite side. But a Samaritan traveler who came upon him was moved with compassion at the sight. He approached the victim, poured oil and wine over his wounds and bandaged them. Then he lifted him up on his own animal, took him to an inn and cared for him. The next day he took out two silver coins and gave them to the innkeeper with the instruction. "Take care of him. If you spend more than what I have given you, I shall repay you on my way back." Which of these three, in your opinion, was neighbor to the robbers' victim?' He answered, 'The one who treated him with mercy.' Jesus said to him, 'Go and do likewise.'" (Luke 10:29-37)

This well-known parable reminds us that to just know the right things is not enough; we must in fact do them. These last few lines of this parable have, for that reason, always been very poignant and meaningful to me. "Who was the neighbor? The one who showed mercy." Jesus then says, "Go and do likewise."

During this particular liturgical year we also had the opportunity to consider the Solemnity of Brotherly Love in regards to the Sundays which surround it. And in particular this past Sunday, the 24th Sunday in Ordinary Time spoke to open up another dimension of this parable and also to our ability to offer Brotherly Love and to truly commit to living a life of love.

The reading for this particular Sunday had primarily to do with forgiveness. In the Gospel reading from St. Matthew we hear Peter asking our Lord, "If my brother sins against me, how often must I forgive him? As many as seven times?" (Matthew 18:21) Of

course from the reading we know Jesus answers, "I say to you, not seven times but seventy-seven times" (Matthew 18:22) We know full well that Jesus, within these words, is not giving an exact number, but is rather telling Peter, however many times you think it should be, the answer is always 'more.' In the parable that follows Jesus describes the overwhelming love and forgiveness of Almighty God via the example of an extremely generous king.

In connecting together this Sunday with the Solemnity of Brotherly Love, an interesting occurrence happened this week while I was celebrating Holy Mass, it just so happened that I forgot to put the Preface appropriate for the Sunday in the missal. I only had the Preface from the week before which was that of Brotherly Love. I sang that Preface because at that point there was really no other choice, but as it turned out the words fit beautifully. After hearing the reading which focused on forgiveness and then my homily trying to show that we all must try to expand our forgiving attitudes towards one another, the Preface words were "You have called us to love one another, demonstrating harmony among brothers and sisters and friendship among neighbors. Your Word tells us that everyone who loves is begotten of You and knows You. Through the love that we have for each other, all will know that we are the Lord's disciples." And the reality is that it is forgiveness that truly gets us to this point when our love becomes active and effective.

In thinking back about the parable concerning the Samaritan, we realize that throughout the entire life of such a person there must have been many insults and possibly even physical confrontations between himself and the Jews. The Jews and the Samaritans considered each other enemies and a Samaritan would certainly not have been welcome as such in the area of Jerusalem and Jericho. But in order for the Samaritan to arrive at the place where he could show mercy to one who was in need, forgiveness must have been a strong part of this journey. It would have been so easy for the Samaritan to just claim that the Jewish victim was an enemy and therefore he shouldn't care one bit about him. He could have easily thought of the many times the Samaritan was poorly treated and then think that now a Jewish person has gotten a taste of his own medicine.

But in fact he did not. The Samaritan was able to put aside all of the many things that may have happened (Continued on Page 20.)

## The Sacraments

This is a 57-page study presented by the United Women's Societies for the Adoration of the Most Blessed Sacrament (UWSAMBS) and published in 1987 by the sub-Central Committee of the UWSAMBS. It is available for purchase from the P.N.C.C. Book Department for \$5.00 plus postage.

The book had its beginnings in discussions at the 46th Annual Convention United Women's Societies for the Adoration of the Most Blessed Sacrament and the 5th Convention called by the sub-central Committee of the Central Diocese. An adopted resolution called for future convention themes to be *Understanding the Sacraments*. At the next six conventions, from 1981 through 1986, papers were prepared and presented. During the 1986 convention held in Dickson City, PA, it was resolved that the papers be published. The papers were prepared by several individuals.

The names of the book's chapters and the authors of the ten chapters are: Understanding the Sacraments (Rev. Jonathan Trela); The Sacraments (Rev. Sigmund Peplowski); Baptism and Confirmation (Rev. Edward Ratajack); The Sacrament of the Word of God (Very Rev. Louis Orzech and Very Rev. Edward Abramski); The Sacrament of Penance (Very Rev. Jan Slys); Holy Eucharist (Rev. Michael Mietlicki); Holy Unction (Very Rev. Stephen Gnas); Holy Orders (Rev. Sigmund Peplowski); and Matrimony: Marriage in Christ (Adopted by XV General Synod).

The first chapter, "Understanding the Sacraments," by Rev. Jonathan Trela, provides an introduction to the Sacraments, separating them into three categories: Initiation, Restoration and Proclamation. He provides a list of 14 study questions in 4 categories to be pondered by readers. These are:

Introduction:

1. What are Sacraments? Why do we call them mysteries?
2. Why do we say that Jesus is primarily neither the author of a religious philosophy nor exponent of a code of morals?
3. How do we manifest our appropriation of the fruits of Jesus' life, death and resurrection?

Initiation:

5. What does Baptism do for us?
6. Is Baptism complete without Confirmation?
7. What does Confirmation cause us to do?

Restoration:

8. Why is the Mystery of Restoration called a second Baptism?
9. Why do personal sins affect everyone in the Church of Christ?
10. How does the Church forgive sins?
11. Why do we commonly call the Mystery of Restoration the Sacrament of Penance?

Proclamation:

12. What does it mean to say: Where the glory of the Lord is preached there the Lord is present?
13. What does it mean to say: the proclamation of the Word of God is Word of God?
14. What completes the salutary event of this Mystery?

The Sacraments, by Rev. Sigmund Peplowski, is in two parts. The first is a description of the use of water, bread, wine and oil in the Sacraments. The second is called "I Am The Bread of Life" and is about the Eucharist. It uses the Gospel of John to illustrate the biblical descriptions of the reception of the Eucharist. The paper ends with the admonition, "The Bread of Life is our nourishment. Never feel that we are unable to approach Christ, but let us keep ourselves worthy of Him. Receive Him often in the Holy Communion; make a spiritual communion with Him whenever possible and his blessings and grace will sustain us and give us life."

Baptism and Confirmation, The First Sacrament of the P. N. C. C., by Rev. Edward Ratajack, has two parts, Part I: Baptism - The Beginning and Part II: Confirmation - The Completion. It states that "The P.N.C. is the first and only Christian Denomination in the World to combine Baptism and Confirmation into one Sacrament and is also the only Christian and Catholic Denomination in the World to have as one of its Sacraments the Word of God." Part I describes the ritual of Baptism as it proceeds from the door of the church to its conclusion with the anointing with oil and the final greeting of "Go in peace and the Lord be with you."

Part II describes the Rite of Confirmation from the hymn to the Holy Spirit and the invocation "May the Holy Spirit come down upon you, and may the power of the Most High keep you from sin" to the recitation of the Apostles Creed by all communicants. The final statement is that "At Baptism, you become a Chris-

tian Child of God to the Church; at Confirmation, you become an adult in the eyes of the Church.”

The Sacrament of the Word of God, The Word of God in General, by Very Rev. Louis Orzech and Very Rev. Edward Abramski, begins with “In a particular sense The Word of God can be defined in this way: The Word of God is Divine revelation given to man by selected men, but above all, by Jesus Christ and his Apostles.” The paper includes excerpts from Holy Scriptures and the leaders of the early Church that show that the Word of God causes man to come to know and love God. It also includes the sixth principle of the Eleven Great Principles of the P. N. C. C. which begins with “Preaching and Hearing the Word of God is recognized as a great sacrament of Christ and the Polish National Catholic Church.” The paper ends with a discussion of preaching in the Polish National Catholic Church.

The Sacrament of Penance is a paper prepared and presented by Very Rev. Jan Slysz. It begins with the admonition that Jesus Christ instituted the Sacrament of Penance after His resurrection with the words from John 20:21-23 “Receive the Holy Spirit if you forgive men’s sins they are forgiven them, if you hold them bound, they are bound.” It should be remembered that seven of the Ten Commandments are concerned with the rights of others.

Holy Eucharist is a paper prepared and presented by Rev. Michael Mietlicki. It begins with a description of the meaning of the word Eucharist. It continues with a story of how the Mass and Eucharistic Liturgy developed over the centuries.

Holy Unction is a paper prepared and presented by Very Rev. Stephen Gnas. The first verse in Matthew 10 says that Jesus “called His disciples together and gave them authority to drive out evil spirits and to heal every disease and sickness.” During the early centuries, there was no distinction between body and soul, so the prayers and anointing with oil was for the whole person giving both bodily and spiritual healing. During the first eight centuries, anointing was for the sick; there was a change in the ninth century from one for the sick to one for the dying. At the Council of Trent in the 16th century, there was a reversal of sorts, in that anointing was not only for the dying; it was said that it was especially for the dying. “Our catechism plainly teaches that Holy Unction is a sacrament for the sick and not only for the dying.” The paper ends with a recommendation by the dele-

gates of the 52nd Convention of the UWSAMBS and the 9th Convention called by the Sub-Central Committee of the Central Diocese, P.N.C.C., “That the Prime Bishop, the Most Rev. Francis C. Rowinski, instruct the Theological and National Liturgical Commissions of the Polish National Catholic Church to work jointly in preparing an updated and modern rite of Holy Unction which would include a separate rite and liturgy for the anointing of the sick in addition to the present procedure of anointing those who have reached the point of death, which has been and is our present and only practice. We further recommend that this updated rite be presented to the delegates attending the next General Synod of the Polish National Catholic Church to be held in October in the Eastern Diocese.”

Holy Orders is a paper prepared and presented by Rev. Sigmund Peplowski. The paper has 11 sections: Rite of Ordination; Christ the True Priest; The Good Shepherd; The First Priests; The Universal Priesthood; The Three Levels of Holy Orders; Deacon; Priest; Bishop; Vocation; and Conclusion. “The duty of the priest is to offer the Sacrifice of the Holy Mass, to bless and guide his people, to proclaim the Word of God and to baptize.” There are three levels of Holy Orders: deacon, priest and bishop.

Matrimony: Marriage in Christ was prepared for the XV General Synod. It is the last paper and has four sections: Outline; Administration of the Sacrament of Matrimony; Annulment, Dissolution and Divorce; and Matrimonial Commission.

“Matrimony is the Sacrament which makes a Christian man and woman husband and wife, gives them grace to be faithful to each other and to bring up their children in love and devotion to God.”

The section of the Administration of the Sacrament of Matrimony has two parts, Preparation and Ceremonies. The preparation part has five statements which include: the requirement that every priest must conform to the laws of the state and the Church; a list of eight requirements to be met before the solemnization of a marriage; allows any priest to decline to solemnize any marriage; P.N.C.C. priests must solemnize marriages only in accordance with the regulations of the P.N.C.C.; denies previously married people to marry again unless their marriage was dissolved by the Church.

The four ceremonies are described. They are: Nuptial Mass and Ceremony, marriage ceremony alone, (Continued on bottom of Page 7.)

## Why Mary is Honored in the Church

**Most Rev. John F. Swantek, Prime Bishop Emeritus**

One of the noticeable differences between the Catholic Churches and Protestant Churches is the reverence given to Mary, the Mother of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. In the Catholic Churches: the Polish National Catholic Church, Old Catholic Churches, Roman Catholic Church, Eastern Orthodox Churches and Anglo-Catholic Churches, churches are placed under the patronage of Mary. Prayers of intercession are addressed to the Mother of Jesus, a number of Marian hymns are in the hymnals, devotions: Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Rosary, Crowning of the statue, of the Blessed Mother are held at various times. Statues, paintings, and icons of the Blessed Mother of God are found in the churches.

The Blessed Mother is highly honored in the Church because God first honored Mary when He chose her to be the mother of His Son, Jesus. From the Gospel of St. Luke we learn that when the Angel Gabriel appeared to Mary. He said, "Hail favored one! The Lord is with you." The Orthodox Study Bible states that "favored one" may also be translated "full of grace." The angel continued, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called son of the most high." (Luke 1:28. 30-32) Mary wondered how this could happen because she was still a virgin. "And the angel said to her in reply, 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of Most High will overshadow you. Therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God.'" (Luke 1:35) It is believed by many that when the Angel Gabriel told her, that she would become the mother of the Son of God and the Holy Spirit descended upon her, that she was sanctified.

For nine months Mary carried the Son of God in her body. While with child, she visited her cousin Elizabeth who was pregnant with John the Baptist who was chosen to be the forerunner of our Lord. After the decree from Caesar Augustus, Mary and Joseph went to the town of Bethlehem to be enrolled as was required by law. Because there was no room in the inn, Joseph and Mary luckily found shelter in a stable. While they were there it was time for Mary to give birth. Angels announced to shepherds, who were watching over their flocks, that the Savior of the

world was born in a stable in Bethlehem. Following the angelic message, the shepherds became curious and decided to go to Bethlehem to see and adore the newly born Christ Child.

Mary and Joseph were devout Jews who followed the obligations of their religion very faithfully. On the eighth day after His birth Jesus was circumcised and given His name. In the Jewish religion when a woman gave birth to a child, she was considered ritually unclean. She, too, had to undergo the rite of purification before she could go to the Temple and attend the services. She was forbidden to enter the Temple for 40 days if the child was a male and 80 days if the child was a female. Following the law, Mary and Joseph took Jesus to the Temple where He was presented to God while Mary was purified. She had to make an offering. If she was wealthy, she had to offer a lamb. If she could not afford one she offered two doves.

When Jesus became older, His parents took Him to Jerusalem for the Passover, a very important holy day for the Jewish people. The Scriptures are silent about Jesus and His family from the time He was twelve and until our Lord was thirty. It is believed that Jesus became a carpenter just like Joseph. At about the age of thirty, Jesus had to leave His mother and the home he had known to begin His ministry of redemption and salvation of the world.

Jesus, Mary, and the Apostles attended a wedding at Cana in Galilee. Sometime during the wedding Mary became aware that the wedding party was running out of wine. This would be a great embarrassment for the newly wedded couple unless something could be done. Mary went to Jesus and told Him of the situation, perhaps believing that He could do something to save the wedding from becoming a disaster. It was here that Jesus performed his first miracle when He changed water into wine.

Our Lord traveled throughout the Holy Land preaching a gospel of love, peace, forgiveness, and repentance. During that time Mary was often in the crowd to listen to her Son, as many mothers would.

When Jesus had been arrested, tried, and finally sentenced to death by crucifixion the Apostles went into hiding. There they would remain until the day of res-

urrection because of their fear of suffering the same fate as their Lord.

Mary became aware that Jesus, her Son, had been sentenced to death by crucifixion. She was not afraid to admit that He was her Son. Although it must have been very difficult for the Blessed Mother, she was present on that first Good Friday. With a broken heart Mary, Mary of Clopas, Mary Magdalene, and John, the Beloved Disciple, made their way to Golgotha, the place of execution. This Holy Mother of Sorrows with the others stood at the foot of the cross and she watched with tear-filled eyes as the world was being redeemed. During that very painful time, as Jesus was hanging on the cross, He looked at His mother and said, "Women, behold your son." Jesus then looked at John and said, "Behold your mother." Our Lord was entrusting His mother to the care of John, who would take Mary for the rest of her life into his home. Even as our Savior hung dying, His last concern was for His mother whom He loved greatly.

Even after the death, resurrection, and ascension of our Lord, the disciple continued to show great love and respect for the Blessed Mother. When the Holy Spirit descended on the disciples in Jerusalem, Mary was with them at the birth of the Church.

For most of His life Jesus lived with His Blessed mother. When the appropriate time came, He left His home of many years to begin the work for which He was born into this world. Mary probably experienced the same feeling as do all mothers when a child leaves home to begin a new phase of their life. How did Jesus feel at this time? He was also human.

Mary occupies a special place in the Church because of her being chosen by God to be the mother of His

only begotten Son. By the way she lived, Mary set the example for all of us to follow. She showered Jesus with her love. She fulfilled the obligations of the Jewish religion and saw that Jesus was reared in a religious atmosphere. When she became aware of a possible disastrous situation she went to her Son and made Him aware of it so that He would prevent an embarrassing misfortune at a wedding. We can say that this was Mary's first intercession. When Jesus was being executed, she was present and gave witness to Him. Let us strive to establish the same kind of relationship with Jesus.

We must remember that Mary was a human being. She was the child of Joachim and Ann who raised their daughter in the same way as did all Jewish parents. Her one difference is that God chose her to be the mother of His Son Jesus. As we asked our mothers when we were growing up to ask our fathers for something, we ask Mary to intercede for us and take our needs to Jesus.

In honor of the Blessed Mother of God, the Church honors her with Masses on the following days: The Conception of the B.V.M. (Dec. 8), Our Lady of Guadalupe (Dec. 12), The Purification of the B.V.M., now called The Presentation of the Lord (Feb. 2), Annunciation of the B.V.M. (March 25), Visitation of the B.V.M. (July 2), Our Lady of Mount Carmel ( July 16), Dormition/Assumption of the B.V.M. (Aug. 15), Our Lady of Czestochowa (Aug. 26), Nativity of the B.V.M. (Sept 8), Holy Mother of Sorrows (Sept. 15), Holy Mother of the Rosary (Oct. 7), Presentation of the B.V.M. (Nov. 21). Perhaps you could attend one of these Masses when they are celebrated in your parish church.

Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death.

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(The Sacraments - Continued from Page 5.)

blessing of civil marriages, marriage to a non-Christian.

In the section on Annulment, Dissolution and Divorce, the terms are explained. Examples of what the Bible says about each term are provided. The 15 different grounds for Annulment or Dissolution are listed. The procedure for Annulment or Dissolution is described.

In the Matrimonial Commission section the composition and 12 regulations under which the commission operates is described.

Each paper has their sources identified. Your parish's religious life would be enhanced if copies of this book was available to your parishioners.

Joseph Francis Seliga  
Chair, P.N.C.C. Commission on History and Archives



## Third Annual Y.M.S. of R. Golf Tournament

Elma, NY

The Third Annual Y.M.S. of R. Golf Tournament took place on Saturday, August 19th at Elma Meadows Golf Course in Elma, New York. The golf course was just a 15-minute ride from the hotels, which were conveniently located near the Buffalo International Airport. The Holy Mother of the Rosary Cathedral Y.M.S. of R. Branch sponsored a night of wings, pizza, beef on weck and other various refreshments on Friday night for everyone's arrival.

Although the skies were a bit threatening, the rain held off, allowing a beautiful day of competitive golf. There were two divisions - open division (anyone) and Y.M.S. of R. division (all Y.M.S. of R. members). For a second year in a row, the team consisting

of Andy Ross, Tom Fox, David Micka and Fr. Jason Soltysiak took the Y.M.S. of R. division title.

Many thanks to the Holy Mother of the Rosary Cathedral and its Y.M.S. of R. The monies collected for this fundraiser will be used to sponsor the Kurs Youth Encampment in Waymart, PA, deferring the costs for the campers and allowing for some leeway with those struggling with finances to have their kids enjoy a week of fellowship, worship, and fun.

The tournament had been held in the Cleveland area the last two years and will be held again in the Buffalo area next year. We look forward to an even larger crowd of golfers.

By Rev. Jason Soltysiak



The United Y.M.S. of R. Committee and Clergy



**Central Diocese**

**Branch #2 Y.M.S. of R. Annual Chicken BBQ  
Holy Mother of Sorrows, Dupont, PA**

The Young Men’s Society of Resurrection, Branch #2 of Holy Mother of Sorrows Parish, Dupont PA, held its 54th Annual Open Pit Chicken BBQ on July 15, 2017. Special thanks to all who volunteered: Paul Kaspriskie, Jr., Paul Kazinetz, Jr., Andrew Shumlas; Nick Kazinetz, Paul Kazinetz, III, Jack Wall, Jr., Anthony Shumlas, Angelo Conforti,

Sr., John Bondurich, Carol Bondurich, Arnold Borc; Al Micka, Frank Kotula, Scott Kotula, John Bondurich, III, Donna Micka, Linda Cebula, Stephanie Shumlas, Lois McHugh, Joseph Azaravich and Gianna Conforti. We also say "Thank you" to all our patrons.

Submitted by Very Rev. Zbigniew Dawid



**Holy Mother of Sorrows Delegates to the P.N.C.C. National Events**

Participants from Holy Mother of Sorrows Parish, Dupont, PA attended the National United Choir Music Workshop in Manchester NH, on July 26 - 28, 2017. Pictured from left to right: Wanda Stash, Jacqueline Stash, Jan Cwikla, Rose Kazinetz, Paul Kazinetz Jr., Susan Baldan and Al Micka

Participants from Holy Mother of Sorrows Parish, Dupont PA attended the 3rd Annual National Y.M.S. of R. Golf Tournament in Elma, N.Y., on August 19, 2017. Pictured from left to right: Paul Kazinetz III, Paul Kazinetz Jr., Nick Kazinetz (President of the Central Y.M. S of R.), Anthony Shumlas and Al Micka

Submitted by Very Rev. Zbigniew Dawid



## Holy Mother of Sorrows' Y.M.S. of R. Celebrates Dupont Centennial

### Dupont, PA

Y.M.S. of R. members of the Holy Mother of Sorrows Parish, Dupont, PA, participated in the Centennial Celebration of the Dupont Borough. They attended the Centennial Parade on

the 26th of August 2017. Pictured from left to right: Nick Kazinetz, Anthony Shumlas, Al Micka, Paul Kazinetz Jr, Very Rev. Zbigniew Dawid; Second picture: Anthony Shumlas with the flags.

Submitted by Very Rev. Zbigniew Dawid



### † śp. Robert F. “Bob” Januszko

In June, Holy Cross Parish, Wilkes-Barre, PA, grieved with the passing of our brother, Robert F. “Bob” Januszko on Sunday, June 4, after a brief illness at Wilkes-Barre General Hospital.

Bob was Chair of the Parish Committee for the last few years. Prior to that he was Vice Chair and Committee Director. He actively headed and helped with many parish events and projects and with his concern and hard work he helped with parish property maintenance and repairs. He never hesitated to work around the church.

Bob was also Plymouth Seniorate representative to the Central Diocese Council and he attended and participated in Diocesan and General Synods of the P.N.C.C. He was a devoted parishioner along with his family, actively participating in parish life. He and his wife, Jodie, observed their 50th wedding anniversary just a few weeks before his passing. Fr. Sr. Thaddeus Dymkowski, pastor, blessed the couple during Mass.

Bob leaves his devoted wife of 50 years, Jozefa “Jodie”; sons Rob C. and wife, Jeanne; Michael and wife, Melissa; Stephen and wife, Mary; grandchildren Andrew, Ryan, Lauren, Ashley, and Joseph; and his brother Walter and wife, Christine.

The funeral was held with Mass on Thursday, June 8, from Holy Cross Church, with burial at the parish cemetery. Serving at the Funeral Mass were grandsons Andrew and Ryan Januszko. The Celebrant of the Funeral Rite was Very Rev. Thaddeus Dymkowski.

Bob is dearly missed by not only his family, but also by every member of Holy Cross Parish with whom he worked, prayed and shared life. This was evident at the funeral with the church being filled with those who came to pay their final respects with prayer for Bob.

Eternal rest grant unto him, O Lord, and may perpetual light shine upon him.

Very Rev. Thaddeus Dymkowski



## Holy Cross Parish Conducts Flea Market & Rummage Sale

### Wilkes-Barre, PA

Holy Cross Polish National Catholic Church Parish, 23 Sheridan Street, Wilkes-Barre, PA, recently conducted a flea market and rummage sale on August 18 - 19, 2017 in the Church Hall and on the parish grounds. Home-made food items and baked goods were also sold.

Members of the Planning committee are pictured below.

Submitted by Very Rev. Thaddeus Dymkowski



Joseph Compton; Joseph Ritsick; Marion Ritsick; Judith Slivoski; Very Rev. Thaddeus Dymkowski, Pastor; Louise Lentint; John Zlotnicki; Sandra Jackson. Absent are Jodie Januszko, Kate Uniatowski and Gloria Dymkowski.

## **Appeal for Christmas Greetings**

It is not too early to start thinking about publishing your Christmas greetings in the December issue of *God's Field*.

In past years your responses to our appeals have been very enthusiastic and we sincerely hope your generosity and support will continue this year.

The cost for publishing Christmas greetings for individuals, parishes and organizations is \$20.00. Due to space constraints in the page setup of the *God's Field*, greetings are limited to up to three (3) lines of text.

An online form can be found on the pncc.org website at: [pncc.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/online\\_greeting\\_form\\_2017.pdf](http://pncc.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/online_greeting_form_2017.pdf)

**ALL GREETINGS, ACCOMPANIED BY PAYMENTS, MUST BE RECEIVED BY NOVEMBER 30, 2017 IN ORDER TO BE INCLUDED IN THE CHRISTMAS ISSUE.**

Please send 3-line greetings, along with payments in the form of check or money order payable to God's Field, to:

God's Field - Christmas Greetings  
National Church Center  
1006 Pittston Avenue  
Scranton, PA 18505

Thank you for your continued support.

## Eastern Diocese

**Commitment to Christ at the 2017 Eastern Diocese Youth Retreat****Camp Howe, Goshen, MA**

“#Commit to Christ” was the theme of the 44th annual Eastern Diocese Youth Retreat. Nearly 50 youth, adults and clergy from nine parishes across the Eastern Diocese gathered at Camp Howe in Goshen, Massachusetts for a beautiful, inspiring, calm and peaceful retreat.



The retreat began with a prayer service on Sunday, August 20, 2017. The theme for the retreat was again done in conjunction with the Year of Commitment across our entire Polish National Catholic Church. An opening prayer service began the retreat where the American, P.N.C.C. and youth retreat flags were raised. Everyone gathered in the rec hall for the opening session led by our diocesan youth chaplain, Fr. Sr. Rob Nemkovich. After a quick overview of the week and a review of the camp rules, Joanne Oliveira led the group with some fun and exciting Ice Breakers. The youth had many laughs as each told the group some fun and exciting facts about themselves and their faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. After our youth spent time going to private confession they enjoyed “Sing” at our camp movie night. Fr. Robert

Fredrickson led the youth in evening prayer. All the campers experienced many creatures during the evening. Several field mice looking for food and a few chipmunks found their way into the cabins. We heard the owls howling but Bishop Paul was most blessed and he got to share his Episcopal Residence with a wonderful cute family of raccoons - thankfully they didn't keep our Bishop awake all night.

Monday began with a few deer making their way across Camp Howe - a beautiful sight for the early risers. The celebration of Holy Mass was celebrated by Fr. Sr. Rob Nemkovich. During the Mass + Jason Fairclough was remembered in prayer (it was 14 years ago that he lost his life as he traveled home from our youth retreat). + Bishop Thomas Gnat was

also remembered during the Opening Mass of the Retreat, Bishop Gnat attended more than 30 diocesan youth retreats during his tenure as Bishop of the Eastern Diocese. During a short sermon – Fr. Sr. Rob encouraged the youth to commit to Christ and be Jesus to others. Thanks to Dylan, Gaby and Emmy for serving at the Altar for this Mass for Youth.

After breakfast, the first session on our retreat theme was presented by Fr. Michal Gitner. His session was “Why Jesus?” and he shared with the youth Jesus healing the paralytic after he was lowered through the roof to the place where Jesus was preaching. The youth were asked to write a letter to themselves about what Jesus means to them. The first activity was led by Joanne Olivera on Commitment. The youth were asked to come up with many ways that they could show their commitment to Christ in various aspects in their lives. Here are some of them: Commit to Church—attending Mass, donating time and money to Church, mission work and serve God as an Altar Server; Commit to Family—household chores, helping family members, family gatherings; Commit to Community - volunteering, donating books to schools, animal shelters, buying from local businesses and giving food to the homeless; Commit to their education - doing your best, studying for tests, reading in free time, going to school everyday and doing homework on time; Commit to Country - serve and support the military, voting, protecting human rights, community service and paying your fair share.



Our second session was again presented by Fr. Michal Gitner on Jesus’ Own Commitment. Focusing on Jesus’ commitment first to His Father in heaven and then to all of God’s children. Some moving clips from Jesus’ ministry were shared with the

youth—very dramatic was Jesus walking on the water and calming the storm at sea. A special thanks to Fr. Michal for presenting two sessions at our retreat while he was in great pain - following his efforts later on in the day he ended up in the hospital for treatment. He was remembered in prayer during the remainder of the retreat and we are glad that he was doing much better by the time our retreat was ended. Our second activity followed where our youth made kites - the theme for the activity was Rise Up and Commit. So this theme was on the kites as well as a list of the ways each of the youth would commit. It was great to see many of our campers flying their kites as they ran up and down the road.

After our camp lunch the participants enjoyed an afternoon of free time. There were many who ventured up the 45-foot-high climbing wall – great job to so many who made the wall look like climbing a ladder. There was time for swimming, kayaking, archery, arts and crafts, four-square and much more. The famous Country Store was opened for business and the youth enjoyed their snacks as always!



Fr. Sr. Joe Soltysiak gave the evening session on the Commitment of Jesus’ Apostles. Fr. Sr. Joe gave a nice overview of the 12 Apostles and illustrated their commitment to Christ and their dedication to building the Church. The youth especially enjoyed a game where they got to name the Apostles (figures were brought out of the box and the youth had to guess which figures match the commitment of the various Apostles). All campers were rewarded with glow sticks for their efforts and they were enjoyed by most!

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(ED Youth Retreat - Continued from Page 13.)

Christian Olympics followed. Thanks to Joanne and Heather for leading these games of the 44th camp Olympiad. Balloon races, blindfolded cotton ball scooping and gloves and gum were just a few of the exciting competitions. Fr. Robert Fredrickson then shared Ice Cream with the youth - he had ten gallons of Ice Cream donated to the retreat and wow did the kids enjoy it. Thanks Fr. Robert! Following the first of our camp Ice Cream socials the youth and adults enjoyed time at the camp fire and some four square in the dark. Fr. Fredrickson led the group in evening prayer and the younger campers were off to bed while the older ones gathered around the camp fire and spent some time star gazing on a crystal clear evening up in the Berkshire mountains.

Tuesday began with Fr. Sr. Rob Nemkovich leading the morning prayer service during which the youth asked our Lord for help in their daily lives when facing the many choices they have to make with peer pressure they face. Fr. Robert Frederickson gave the morning session on Witnesses. He shared with the youth the many opportunities they have to witness to their faith in Christ in their everyday lives—even in standing in line at McDonalds they can witness to Christ. Fr. Robert told them to speak and live the truth in Christ Jesus and gave examples of some of the saints and through their witness showed their commitment to Christ. All the participants got a rock that said “Witnesses - Acts 1:8” and that verse is *You shall be My Witnesses*.

Community Service was the next morning effort as our youth gave back to 4-H Camp Howe. They sanded and painted a few of the camp picnic tables which needed sprucing up. What a great job they did.



The youth gave of their time to give back to the camp for all the camp has done for our diocesan youth program through the years. After the second coat was applied the youth enjoyed many team building activi-

ties teaching them the importance of depending on one another and being there for others. Thanks to the great Camp Howe staff for teaching such important lessons of working together and depending upon one another to accomplish a given task. Some great life skills for our youth.



After lunch our youth were able to go out in God's creation and enjoy swimming, kayaking, archery, arts and crafts, the ropes course, four-square and more.



Fr. Sr. Rob Nemkovich presented his session: How to Commit to Christ today. The words of Jesus were used to present this. Some ways the youth were encouraged to commit were to follow Jesus, to love as Jesus taught and did, to serve, to use their gifts and to be Jesus to others as “You may be the only Jesus some people see”. Fr. Sr. Rob also showed a clip from Nick Vujicic about having hope because of Christ and that with God we can always get back up.

The youth then enjoyed a second ice cream social thanks to Fr. Fredrickson. We thank him and Kathy for serving all delicious ice cream sundaes. Fr. Sr.

Rob Nemkovich led the annual candlelight service and with a weather front coming though the winds hit us from every direction. It was a challenge to keep all the candles lit but we did manage to do so with help from each other. Soon after the service concluded the lightning found us and we were off to our cabins to shelter in place. An incredible storm passed through where inches of rain fell and a lightning strike on the boys sides of camp. All weathered the storm and then beautiful refreshing fall air followed.

Wednesday began with Fr. Fredrickson celebrating Morning Prayer. After a bacon-packed breakfast our next presentation was on the Institution of the P.N.C.C. Brenda Richard with help from Fr. Sr. Rob did a great job showing the early days of our P.N.C.C. under the leadership of Bishop Hodur and the purpose and work of our P.N.C.C. here in North America and throughout Europe. The 2017 Camp Spirit Award (that is presented each year in memory of Jason Fairclough remembering his camp spirit and looking out for others) was awarded to Erin Tudryn from Holy Name of Jesus Parish in S. Deerfield, MA. Her name will be added to the plaque and will be remembered at future Youth Retreats. Congratulations Erin!



Then it was off to Spare Time Bowl for a couple of strings of bowling. The youth and adults had a wonderful time bowling and laughing and having great fun. A big Thank You to District 3 of the Polish National Union for sponsoring this bowling trip. There were many strikes made and our younger ones found creative ways to use the bumpers to get those scores up.



The afternoon was spent in free time where the high ropes, swimming, canoeing, kayaking, archery, arts and crafts and foursquare were bustling. Our campers again assisted the Camp Howe Staff by bringing in the docks for the season—a sure sign the fall is finally coming :)

After southern country chicken, Bishop Paul Sobiechowski gave the final session of Youth Retreat 2017: Bishop Hodur's Commitment. Bishop spoke about how Bishop Hodur was committed to following Christ and did so faithfully during his life. Our Bishop also taught the youth how Bishop Hodur rooted the P.N.C.C. in the Catholic and Apostolic faith of the Undivided Church. After this session Fr. Fredrickson handed out Camp Howe - Eastern Diocese Retreat 2017 - #Commit To Christ T-shirts to all gathered. Thanks to Fr. Robert, Bishop Paul and the Eastern Diocese for donating these shirts to our participants.

Our cabins then gave their reflections on the week of retreat and gave some examples of how they can commit to Christ in their lives. We hope and pray they do just that. On the final evening of camp we had our annual Bonfire. The Camp Howe staff did a great job with skits, songs and stories. The Moose and other camp songs were quite a hit. S'mores and popcorn popped on the camp fire were then enjoyed with the Camp Howe Staff. The youth also spelled out #Commit with their flashlights - so cool.

Bishop Paul Sobiechowski began our final day of retreat celebrating Holy Mass on the Feast of St. Bartholomew. Bishop in his sermon spoke about St. Bartholomew and asked the youth to take the important teachings they learned this past week and apply them in their lives. He told them to commit to Christ and His Church and take what they have learned this week and share it with others. Thanks to Charles and Zack for serving at the Altar for this Holy Mass.

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(ED Youth Retreat - Continued from Page 15.)



At our last meal at Camp Howe for 2017 the participants sang their eleventh and final grace of the retreat to the tune of the doxology: “For food and health and happy days - accept our gratitude and praise - in serving others Lord may we - repay our debt of love to Thee. Amen.”

After camp clean up, everyone gathered for our closing session, led by Fr. Robert Fredrickson. He thanked all the youth for attending, all the chaperones, session presenters and activity leaders for their work for the youth of our diocese. He asked the youth to make a real commitment to Christ and show that commitment in how they live: walking in the way of Jesus.

Thanks are given to Bishop Paul, the session presenters, our activity coordinator Joanne Oliveira, our country store manager – Brenda Richard, to Janice Dzialo and Maryann Zarek for a great job on the backdrop, to our Eastern Diocese Adoration of the Most Blessed Sacrament Society for their generous annual donation to our retreat and to all the chaperones who gave of their time to make Youth Retreat 2017 an outstanding success! Thanks to Natalie Chmielewska and Charles Vassas for their wonderful pictures.

The retreat ended with a prayer service and the lowering of the American, P.N.C.C. and Eastern Diocese Youth Retreat flags. We are excited to announce that Youth Retreat 2018 will again be held at Camp Howe in Goshen, Massachusetts beginning on Sunday August 19, 2018. The countdown to Youth Retreat next year has already begun on a few cell phones!

We are excited to announce our next diocesan youth event will be our Winter Youth Gathering/Lock In - Friday, December 29<sup>th</sup> to Saturday December 30<sup>th</sup> at Blessed Trinity Parish in Fall River, MA. We will begin Friday afternoon and lock ourselves in at Blessed Trinity and wrap up this winter retreat late Saturday morning. It should be a great time. God bless and we look forward to seeing you all again at our 45<sup>th</sup> annual Diocesan Youth Retreat beginning next August 19<sup>th</sup>. #Commit to Christ!

Committed in Christ, Fr. Sr. Rob Nemkovich

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## St. Joseph's Dożynki — A Festival of Thanksgiving

### Westfield, MA

St. Joseph's P.N.C.C. in Westfield, MA held its annual Dożynki — Polish Harvest Festival on Sunday, September 10, 2017.

This year's festival at St. Joseph's was held from Noon to 4:00 p.m. at the parish social center and parish grounds. The harvest wreath, which was blessed during the 8:00 a.m. Mass, was brought to the festival with a procession starting at 2:00 p.m. A Dożynki program, highlighted by the St. Joseph's Dożynki Dancers performing traditional Polish folk dances, followed. The St. Joseph's Dożynki Dancers is a group of young people from St. Joseph's Parish.

Polish music was played throughout the festival and the day's events also included games for all ages as well as plenty of delicious traditional Polish and American fare.

As we celebrate Dożynki, we are reminded of the old Polish traditions concerning the feast. A mound-shaped wreath (“wieniec” or “snop”) made of grain, herbs, flowers, fruits and vegetables, adorned with red and white ribbons, is blessed by the priest on the day of the festival. The Dożynki singers, representing “peasants,” bring the wreath to the festival and present it to the landlord and his wife (“Pan” and “Pani”). Special harvest songs are offered and then there is a time of merriment, dancing and feasting.

Mr. Trent Taylor, Chair of the Parish Committee, and Very Rev. Joseph Soltysiak, pastor, extend a most cordial invitation to all to attend next year's Dożynki. We are sure that you will have a most enjoyable family time!

Submitted by Very Rev. Joseph Soltysiak

## Thank You

On June 21, 2017, early in the morning, the Rt. Rev. Thomas J. Gnat, passed from this earthly kingdom to the heavenly kingdom.

His life was one of Faith, Caring and Love. He served almost 60 years in the Church he loved. From Assistant pastor to Pastor and finally to Bishop. He cared for and preached the faith to many.

We thank everyone, who prayed for his health, who sent cards, who called on the phone, who visited the hospital, and nursing home. We thank those who were there for support during the funeral services. And I thank those who considered Bishop Gnat a friend, and those who consoled us because I lost my best friend, and Joseph lost his father.

Thank you to those who sent personal gifts to our family, and to those who donated to the Clergy Pension Fund in memory of Bishop Gnat.

His life was one of Faith, Caring and Love, for his family, for his friends, for his parishioners, and for the Polish National Catholic Church.

Katherine and Joseph Gnat

## Youth Sunday – Blessing of Backpacks

### St. Casimir's Church, Lowell, MA

The third annual Youth Sunday Mass was held August 27, 2017 at St. Casimir's Church, Lowell, MA.

On this day, children and youth sing the hymns, read the scriptures, take up the collection, and play various instruments accompanying their sisters, brothers and friends.

Readers for the day were Ian Ford-Hunt (Isaiah 22:15, 19-23) and James Bigelow (Romans 11:33-36). Collection was taken by James Kosidlo.

Father Tenus gave a very inspiring sermon based on Jesus' question "Who do you say I am?" and asking us all to spend more time in prayer and scripture reading rather than on earthly endeavors.

The first hymn sung was "Praise Him! Praise Him!" This was followed by "Do Lord", accompanied on the guitar by Karina Tenus. "Alleluia" was sung just before Communion. Joseph Grieve accompanied himself on the keyboard while singing "Where He Leads Me I Will Follow". Father Tenus accompanied the children/youth on his guitar while they sang "We Were Made To Love The Lord".

Following the end of Mass, Father blessed the children/youth and their backpacks as they start back to school, asking for God to guide these young people in their studies and to keep them safe.

The Mass concluded with the singing of "God Bless America."



**Western Diocese****St. Mary's Parish Mission Team News****Parma, OH**

The Mission Team of St. Mary's Parish, Parma, OH, has begun putting together mats that will be distributed to those in need in the local area.

The parish has been collecting plastic bags for quite some time, and many have already been collected; but a lot are still needed!

The Mission Team met in August to begin bag-clipping and preparation for the mats which will be weaved into mats.

The parish is very grateful to everyone who donated (and continue to donate) bags and to everyone who is lending a helping hand with creating mats.



## **P.N.C.C. Seeking National Media Relations Manager**

At the April 2017 Supreme Council Meeting, a recommendation from the Future Direction Committee was approved to establish an Office of News and Media Relations. The objective of this Office is to increase the visibility of the P.N.C.C. throughout the United States and Canada through press releases, tapping the appropriate social media outlets. These releases will focus on the P.N.C.C.'s distinct Catholic perspective, including its unique Solemnities, national events, community outreach efforts and the official statements of the Prime Bishop.

To support this vital program, applications for a National Media Relations Manager are currently being accepted. This is a volunteer position. To express your interest in this position, please submit your resume, contact information and a writing sample to the Office of the Prime Bishop. Email: [secretarytopb@pncc.org](mailto:secretarytopb@pncc.org) prior to September 15, 2017.

### **Job Description**

#### **Summary**

Responsible for development and execution of external communication plans and messaging for the P.N.C.C., based on information provided by the Office of the Prime Bishop.

#### **Primary responsibilities**

- Prepare external communication content, including press releases, press kits for the media, social media postings and related materials based on information provided by the Office of the Prime Bishop. Media includes traditional and current social media avenues.
- Develop and maintain a listing of external media resources and appropriate contact information.
- Develop and maintain a calendar of external communications for the P.N.C.C.
- When necessary, act as a media spokesperson for this media on behalf of the P.N.C.C., under the direction of the Office of the Prime Bishop.

#### **Qualifications**

- BA/MA degree in Marketing, Advertising, Communications, English or a related discipline
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills
- Tactical understanding of all primary social media platforms; solid business experience with social media including blogs, Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, etc.
- Proactive, reliable, responsible and accurate with an attention to detail



(Our Commitment to Living a Life of Love - Continued from Page 3.)

to him and his family through the years. He was able to forgive the many injuries that he may have suffered and endured over many years and through this forgiveness he was then able to show mercy and ultimately Brotherly Love.

My dear brothers and sisters, we too are often crippled by the hatred and hurt feeling that we have received throughout our lives. Sometimes these hurts are not even our own, but rather ones that we have appropriated through our friends and family. And these cause us not to be able to show mercy to others, or sometimes to limit the mercy we show only to those whom we think are worthy of it.

This is not the way of Jesus. Jesus tells us to forgive, not only those we like or those we judge to be worthy, but rather to forgive generously because the Lord has forgiven us so generously as well. Then realizing that the Lord loves all and forgiving any hurts and wrongs we hold on to, we are able to show mercy. We are able to “do likewise” as Jesus com-

mands and be the bearers of Brotherly Love, the love that shows itself in actions of mercy.

So while we often think of forgiveness of others as merely an internal action within ourselves as we cast aside our anger and give up our desire to seek revenge, it is rather the first step of our commitment to living a life of love for others. This love, a brotherly love, shows itself in acts of mercy and kindness towards another person, but it begins by knowing that all have been generously loved and forgiven by God and therefore, knowing that we should, “do likewise” we will love and forgive each other.

These words are wonderfully summed up in the writing of John the Apostle, who tells us, “We love because He first loved us. If anyone says, ‘I love God,’ but hates his brother, he is a liar; for whoever does not love a brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen. This is the commandment we have from Him: whoever loves God must also love his brother.” (1 John 4:19-21)

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## P.N.C.C. Celebration

### Solemnity of the Christian Family



The P.N.C.C. is again offering to the parishes a full-color brochure describing the Solemnity of the Christian Family, a unique feast of our Church. This is a perfect point of information to include in welcome packets or to have in bulletin racks.

The brochures are available for purchase in increments of 25 from the Office of the Prime Bishop. An order form can be found on the P.N.C.C. website at:

[pncc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/solemnities\\_brochures\\_order\\_form.pdf](http://pncc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/solemnities_brochures_order_form.pdf). We hope that all parishes will help to spread the awareness of this important Solemnity of the Polish National Catholic

And don't forget that you can still view Prime Bishop Anthony Mikovsky's 2016 Solemnity of the Christian Family online presentation by visiting the P.N.C.C. Future Direction YouTube page at [youtube.com/watch?v=q1B2ias2sKM](http://youtube.com/watch?v=q1B2ias2sKM). We encourage you to watch this with your parish family or with your family at home.