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## Who Do You Say That I Am?

Most Rev. Anthony Mikovsky  
Prime Bishop

On the upcoming Twenty-first Sunday in Ordinary Time we hear our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, direct a question to His disciples in the Gospel reading for the day.

“Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, ‘Who do people say that the Son of Man is?’ And they said, ‘Some say John the Baptist, but others Elijah, and still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.’ He said to them, ‘But who do you say that I am?’ Simon Peter answered, ‘You are the Messiah, the Son of the Living God.’ And Jesus answered him, ‘Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you but My Father in heaven.’ (Matthew 16:13-17)

During the past few weeks we have heard our Lord and His teachings through a number of parables regarding the Kingdom of God. We have had to spend some serious time in contemplation on what exactly we are to understand about the operation of the reign of Jesus around us and in the world. Then as we read about the miracles of Jesus, we must have the same sort of consideration. We must look into these miracles with the same intent as we did the teachings of Jesus. These miracles tell us something about the reign of God and the action of the Lord Jesus Christ within our lives.

But now after all of this, standing within the city of Caesarea Philippi, our Lord asks His disciples, and us through them, “But who do you say that I am?” A little background to this gospel might help us to get to the bottom of the question that Jesus is asking.

This town was named Caesarea in the time following the birth of our Lord. When Jesus was born, Herod the Great was the political leader of the Jews throughout the area. Following his death the kingdom was split into four pieces, and this area was ruled by his son Philip. It was Philip who named the city Caesarea to honor the Roman Emperor and therefore Caesarea Philippi means Philip’s Caesarea. Within this town there was also a temple to honor the Emperor known as the Augusteum. One can imagine that while seeing what was occurring there in Caesarea Philippi with the worship of a purely human person, Jesus is contrasting this by asking the disciples, “Who do you say that I am?”

When the answer comes from Simon Peter that Jesus is, “the Messiah, the Son of the Living God,” it is given as a counter to what is surrounding the disciples in this town. They will not put their faith and give their loyalty to any human, no matter how powerful or influential they may be. In stating that our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is the Messiah, the Son of the Living God, they are stating that He will be placed first within their lives. His teachings are not just good ideas then, but rather divine instruction. It is only upon Him that they will rely as they continue the mission that Jesus has laid out for them as His followers.

It is then with this understanding that Jesus replies to Simon Peter: “And I tell you, you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Church and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it.” (Matthew 16:18) And while some have seen within these words a

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Typewritten articles and photographs may be submitted to:

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special and unique ministry given to St. Peter, rather, speaking with many of the Fathers of the Church, we see that the rock that Jesus speaks of is the confession that Simon Peter had just made asserting that Jesus is, “the Christ, the Son of the Living God.”. As one example we hear from St. Augustine who said in his work, “The Retractions:” “I so explained what the Lord said: ‘You are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church,’ that it be understood as built upon Him whom Peter confessed saying, ‘You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God.’” Likewise John Chrysostom tells us in Homily 54 on the Gospel of Matthew: “Therefore [Jesus] added this, ‘And I say unto you, you are Peter, and upon this rock will I build my Church,’ that is, on the faith of his confession.” On this confession then of Jesus as the Christ, the Messiah, the Savior, Son of the living God, we place our trust, our faith and our loyalty.

Within our world today though, these statements should also give us some pause for reflection. During the days of our Lord, there were certainly many who took the Roman Emperor as a divine figure and put their trust in him even though as a mere human he could not save them. While in our world today we might not have that same kind of devotion to a political figure, there are certainly many things or many ways of life that are vying for our devotion. We can fall prey to our own greed and avarice by believing that if we have the latest car, or phone, or clothes, or whatever else that item may be, we will finally have some peace, contentment and security within our lives. The thing is that it’s never true. We need to be able to answer the question for each and every one of these items, “What role does this fulfill for me?” Or maybe to follow the example of Jesus, “What do you say this item is?”

This exercise will show us that we can still enjoy the blessings of modern life without becoming a slave to it. We can examine our relationship with the things of the world and make sure that we are not turning these things into idols. And rather we can contemplate the question of our Lord Jesus Christ, when He asked “Who do you say that I am?”

So my brothers and sisters of our Holy Church, I ask you, in the days and weeks to come, what is the answer to that question? Is our Lord someone that you only turn to when you desire or want something? Do you go to Church just because you think that you must or because it has become a habit? Or is Jesus

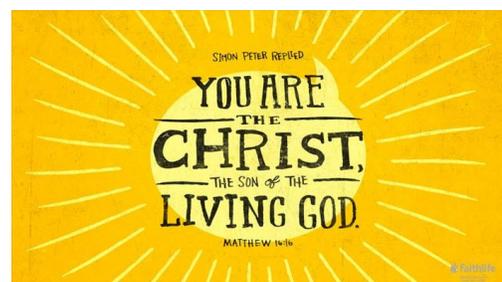
really the one for whom you can say, ‘He is the Christ, the Son of the Living God?’ And then also live your life in accord with that confession.

The answer is vitally important because it determines who and what rules each and every moment of your life. Do you follow Jesus, or someone or something else? It is certainly my hope and prayer that as we come through this season of understanding the ways and work of the Kingdom of God and the reign of Jesus in the world, we will truly understand what exactly is at stake. The issue is where do we stand in relation to the true Savior of the world and all creation? The issue is, are we with and for Christ or with and for something else?

My brothers and sisters, as we have spent time in understanding the teachings of Jesus on the Kingdom and Reign of God, as we have encountered Him in His miracles, let us now confess that Jesus truly is “the Christ, the Son of the Living God.” And also let us realize that in and through this confession, we will receive the contentment of a life of security in knowing that Jesus is with us and one day we will be with Him as well.

For Jesus tells us to be concerned about ranking anything ahead of Himself: “Therefore do not worry, saying ‘What will we eat?’ or ‘What will we drink?’ or ‘What will we wear?’ For it is the gentiles who strive for all these things and indeed your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But strive first for the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.” (Matthew 6:31-33)

So confess, believe and be loyal to Jesus, Who is the Christ, the Son of the Living God. Seek the reign, the way and the will of God on earth. “Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” (Philippians 4:5-7)



# **Consecration of Bishop-Elect Jarosław Rafalko**

**St. Stanislaus Cathedral**

**Scranton, PA**

**September 14, 2020**

**Solemnity of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross**

**2:00 p.m.**

As most of you know Very Rev. Jarosław Rafalko was elected as a Candidate for Bishop at the Special Synod held on Friday, October 25, 2019 at St. Stanislaus Youth Center in Scranton, PA. It was a time of great joy within our Holy Church that an excellent bishop candidate had been chosen. At the Supreme Council meeting that immediately followed the Synod, Bishop-Elect Rafalko was assigned as the Administrator of the Western Diocese of the P.N.C.C. and a date for consecration was set in the Spring of 2020.

Then the Covid-19 pandemic hit. It hit both the Church and our country hard.

As a part of the many great adjustments that were made, the consecration was postponed and in the subsequent months many other difficult decisions for the Church were made.

During this time a date for the consecration was set: Monday, September 14, 2020, the Solemnity of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross. Although things have certainly not returned to normal within our country, the bishops have decided to keep this consecration date for Bishop-Elect Jarosław Rafalko.

The position of a Diocesan Bishop is vital to the functioning of the Western Diocese of our Holy Church. Our Constitution states: "By the will of God, the highest authority in a diocese resides in the Diocesan Bishop who is vested with the care and administration of his diocese." (Article II, Section 1(3)b)

The Western Diocese needs its bishop in order for the Church to be able to perform its work in building up the kingdom of Almighty God. The parishes, the pastors and the faithful need their bishop to fully do the work that the Church is called to do. For this reason the consecration will be held on September 14, 2020.

We realize that this situation is not ideal. We had certainly hoped that the celebration for the consecration of Bishop-Elect Rafalko would be a large and joyous one where the entire Polish National Catholic Church would gather together to celebrate this great occasion. Because of the coronavirus pandemic, this will not be the case. The ceremony will be scaled back and only a limited number of the faithful will be allowed within St. Stanislaus Cathedral. This number, which is set at approximately 85, is driven by the pressing need to remain socially distanced. Unfortunately, because of this an open invitation to the consecration is not being extended.

But it is hoped that this situation will allow each member of the Polish National Catholic Church to join in prayer on that day for it is still an important and joyous day for our entire Church. The consecration ceremony will be taped and will be released at a later time for all to view.

As you all keep Bishop-Elect Jarosław Rafalko in your prayers, I encourage you to express those sentiments directly to him and assure him of your prayers for his ministry and for our Holy Church.

His address is:

Bishop-Elect Jarosław Rafalko  
Chancery of the Western Diocese  
920 North Northwest Highway  
Park Ridge, IL 60068-2358

## G-4/P.N.C.C. Ecumenical Dialogue Group Meets



On July 28, 2020, the G-4/P.N.C.C. Ecumenical Dialogue Group met via Zoom. This took the place of the scheduled in-person meeting that was to be held in Manchester, New Hampshire. Representing the Polish National Catholic Church were Prime Bishop Anthony Mikovsky, Bishops John Mack and Paul Sobiechowski, Father Senior Robert Nemkovich, Jr., and Fathers John Kowalczyk, Scott Lill and Thomas Walsh. G-4 members included Bishops Paul Hewett (Diocese of the Holy Cross - DHC), Walter Grundorf (Anglican Province in America - APA), Chandler Jones (APA), and Brian Marsh (Anglican Church in America - ACA), and Fathers Robert Bader (DHC), Jonathan Foggin (Anglican Catholic Church - ACC), and Christian Tutor (ACA). Bishop Sobiechowski served as the Dialogue Chairman for this meeting.

Updates were given by the various churches and the Union of Scranton about recent events within their

respective communions and how they have adapted to the ongoing Covid situation. The Churches spoke with a united voice about the marginalization of the Church by the media and various elected officials during this pandemic. The members participating were of one accord affirming that Church is absolutely essential for the faithful to live out their Catholic Faith and Sacramental lives, especially during this time of anxiety and pandemic. The dialogue also discussed various ways the Churches can continue to grow closer together and achieve the unity that our Lord prayed for His Catholic Church. The next meeting of the G4/P.N.C.C. Ecumenical Dialogue is scheduled for January 2021, to be hosted by the G4 Churches.

Submitted by Very Rev. Robert Nemkovich, Jr.



## Kurs 2020 - The Show Must Go On!

By Nick Kazinetz

It is with great pleasure and honor as the President of the United Young Men's Society of Resurrection, that I am able to report on Kurs 2020 to the members of the Polish National Catholic Church. Planning for Kurs was not the easiest, but with a lot of guidance and a great staff we pulled it off.

There was never a doubt that Kurs would happen, but as a staff we had to make the experience engaging for our campers and keep our counselors safe. The goal was to recreate Kurs as best we could and present a positive program for our campers, both spiritually and socially. I hope our effort gave people a sense of faith, hope, and love for our Church and Jesus Christ. We will get through this pandemic, and when we work together, we can achieve anything.

A big thank you to the United Y.M.S. of R. Board for supporting our effort in moving forward in the early months of the year. Thank you to Spójnia, Inc. for allowing the Kurs to happen at the Bishop Hodur Retreat Center with our essential staff. Thank you to Prime Bishop Mikovsky for having Mass on Independence Day and speaking at the Kurs. Thank you to the clergy who presented at Kurs, and all the campers and Kurs alumni who followed us all week. Our staff will now individually report on their week and how our team effort pulled off the Kurs. I want to commend them for their effort, because they are purely motivated for the good of the Church and its youth.

*First up is Jennessa Dalton who created our first video in May to let our campers know that we would move forward with Kurs.*

### Jennessa Dalton

Finding out that we wouldn't be able to have our usual week at camp was heartbreaking to us all, but we wanted the kids to know that we would not let it keep us from connecting with them. We made the video in hopes that everyone could really see that we as a staff were going to do everything in our power to still give them the camp experience that they know and love. Fortunately, we live in a time in which technology could help us overcome this challenge and we appreciate that we were given this opportunity to grow as a family in a new way. We as a staff love and appreciate camp just as much as the camp-

ers. The campers' participation proved to us how dedicated they are to Kurs and how flexible they can be when it comes to change. Throughout all the technical complications the campers remained patient as we worked through all the ups and downs. It was incredible to see everyone come together to learn our new normal.

*After Jennessa made everyone aware that Kurs 2020 was going to happen it was up to our Chaplain, Father James Konicki, from Holy Name of Jesus Parish in Schenectady, NY, to come up with a theme.*

### Rev. Jim Konicki

Over the past several years we have had both a fun theme and a spiritual theme for Kurs. We have worked diligently to make those themes complementary and have provided our youth with a consistent message through fun, entertainment, prayer, liturgy, and study. This blended focus brings us to a life fully and joyfully in Christ Jesus. In 2017 "We Held a Treasure" based on 2 Corinthians 4:7. We acted out a fun pirate lifestyle and experience, searching for treasure, while coming to know the real treasure we have in Jesus and our Holy Church.

In 2018 we entered into epic Olympic style competition while learning that the ultimate joy in competition and victory has to do with keeping the faith in the face of every challenge. St. Paul told his young prodigy Timothy this when he wrote: "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith." -- 2 Timothy 4:7. In 2019 we celebrated the 90th anniversary of Spójnia Farm and Bishop Hodur's vision with the theme: "What I received, I passed on to you," taken from 1 Corinthians 15:3. **THE CHALLENGE WAS ACCEPTED!**

The year 2020 brought new challenges and a dedicated group of men and women, clergy and laity, youth and adults who said, 'The Show Must Go On.' King David laid out a huge challenge for his teen son when he had Solomon made king. The show had to go on, Solomon had to bring to completion those things his father had prepared for. As 1 Chronicles 28:20 recounts, David told his young son: "Be strong and courageous, and do the work. Don't be afraid or terrified. The LORD God, my God, will be with you." We the Kurs experience to our campers virtually and

strengthened them through our gathering together and our instruction. Those who were once understudies took the stage to lead us into the future.

The year 2020 also offered us the opportunity to really talk about God's vision for humanity and where we have departed from His vision for us. We learned that seeing difference is in itself an error. Our primary call is to see in each person 'another self' and the image of God. We confronted the challenges of our time openly and honestly - not from a political point of view, but from God's point of view. We often miss the miracles that surround us each day. As chaplain for Kurs over these years, and for Convo 2018, they have been made plain and evident in the sight of many witnesses. Shy and quiet children take the stage as strong young women and men to bear witness to Jesus and His way of living. The kid who felt he or she could never win, wins. Vocations to the priesthood begin to blossom. Disappointment becomes joy. Healing begins where there is brokenness in a child's life, and God makes things happen unexpectedly. To Him be the glory and praise!

As the primary act of worship for the people of God, the Holy Mass is offered each day at Kurs. I would like to offer a special thank you to Prime Bishop Anthony, Bishops Bernard and Paul, Fathers Alfonso Castillo (a beautiful televised Holy Mass from St. Francis of Assisi in Denver, Colorado) and Carmen Bolock for their teaching and ministry. Their dedication to being there, to serving our youth, and to be 'doing the work,' is testimony to the Holy Spirit alive among us.

*After Fr. Konicki had us prepared with a theme, his son Adam was ready to get the ball moving with our annual t-shirts.*

### **Adam Konicki**

Leading up to camp I was tasked with designing the shirts for this year's virtual camp. As the campers and staff know, getting their shirt is a staple of the week. This shirt often reflects the theme we share during the week. Sitting down with my father we were able to brainstorm just what Kurs means during a time of uncertainty; resilience. The Kurs Acronym I selected was, "Kneeling Unafraid Rising Strong." This embodied who we are not just as the Kurs family but also as the Polish National Catholic Church. While we undergo unprecedented times, we as the people of God are unshaken in our faith and will therefore become stronger because of it. The back of

the shirt was representative of our tour destinations, showing where each of the staff members home parishes are located. Finally, at the bottom of the shirt there is a message of hope to our Kurs family which reads, "Reunion tour 2021."

During the week I was responsible for video recording work as well as technical support. This was quite the task as the week went on but very rewarding to see my and my fellow staff's efforts come to fruition. We came together as a staff and overcame any technical challenge that was presented to us. It was work, and I must say, I was struggling to find answers when technology did not have any, but throughout the process we found truth in the work we were getting done. I enjoyed providing this experience to our Kurs kids and I truly believe they got something out of it. For example, I led a social justice Q and A with my father, and I believe we touched on issues that were relevant to today's society, tackling them from a religious perspective. I know for myself I left knowing more than I did coming in. One of our primary goals during this virtual Kurs was creating the "Kurs experience" as best as we could to our campers. Just one way we did this was by creating reenactment videos of the Kurs experience that every camper can relate to. One of these showed me as a parent dropping off my kids for the week and going through the registration process. While another demonstrated a typical candy shop night at the Bishop Hodur Retreat and Recreation Center. These videos were well received and created a sense of nostalgia for our current campers and also past campers. The counselors did a phenomenal job this week; my kids loved it, and just as usual when I picked my kids up, they were asleep before we even left Waymart.

*The Kurs staff now has a theme and a vision. But how can we pull this off? We needed the help of our past campers and Spójnia, Inc. Through the efforts of the 90 for 90 Campaign to raise money for the Bishop Hodur Retreat and Recreation Center, those that donated helped make Kurs possible. New renovations brought a projection screen, projector and WIFI. We will now hear from Spójnia, Inc. Directors Stacey Shrive and Paul Gorgol.*

### **Stacey Shrive**

Back in March when the pandemic hit, my first thought was, "Kurs isn't going to happen." The more I thought about it, I thought about this occurring, and

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it broke my heart. I was also worried about the well-being of the Bishop Hodur Retreat and Recreation Center as a Spójnia, Inc. Director, knowing the busy summer we had ahead of us with all the rentals. I knew the board had some hard decisions to make on whether we were allowing the retreat center to remain open and keep our renters and employees safe.

In May is when there seemed to be a light at the end of the tunnel and the Kurs Staff knew, "The Show Must Go On." With the help of the staff, through many online meetings I created a way for virtual camp to come alive. Once this was designed, and following all CDC guidelines, I brought the plan to the Spójnia, Inc. Board for their approval. Everything was moving so fast and now we needed a registration form for our virtual campers. So, I started to create a Google form that allowed us to collect the information we needed from the campers, and after many edits we got what we wanted. Also, with the help of Fr. Jim we set up a way to collect our registration fee, which allowed us to send care packages to every camper who registered, so they would participate in the virtual Kurs activities.

*Thank you to Jennessa, Fr. Konicki, Adam, Stacey and Paul for getting their articles in and reporting on the first portion of Kurs. There will be an article next month explaining what we did once we got to the Retreat Center and how we made virtual Kurs work.*

*Once campers registered, they received a Kurs Grab Bag from headquarters in Maryland from Spójnia, Inc. Director Paul Gorgol.*

### **Paul Gorgol**

Our staff was very conscious of the fact we had to make the kids feel as if they were actually attending the KURS, even if they were watching through a computer. So, the idea came up to send every registered camper a "goodie bag" filled with items that were representative of KURS events. Cinch bags that campers can use throughout the year and even bring to KURS 2021 were created and filled with – the U.S flag to remind them of the morning and evening ritual of raising and lowering the flag; balloons for water balloon fights or shaving cream balloons (you have to be there to understand); a cross to remind them of our whole purpose of the retreat center and the KURS; candy from the candy store, a peace sign to spread positivity in this crazy world today; a hand towel to remind them of KP chores; and a short sleeve tee with this year's logo on the front and the most important message on the back – come back for the Reunion Tour in 2021!



## **News from the National United Choirs**

Sing *together* - wouldn't that be great? Well, our prayers are for that to soon to be the case!

Save these 2021 dates:

Wednesday, August 4th - 35th General Convention  
Thursday & Friday, August 5th & 6th - 27th Music Workshop & Concert  
Holy Cross Parish in Hamtramck, MI

The workshop committee met on Wednesday, July 29th, via ZOOM, to start the preparations. We are excited that our program will be valuable and educational to all who choose to participate. We guarantee there will be much fun and sharing of laughter all while we focus on lifting our voices in His name.

The workshop will be dedicated in memory of the late Bishop Ordinary of the Western Diocese, Rt. Rev. Stanley M. Bilinski, whose support of the music ministry in the P.N.C.C. was unending.

Stay "tuned" (get it?) for further updates, but mark your calendars now@

Cathy bilinski  
Wendy Blotzer  
Liz Kaniewski  
Chris Paulus

## Polish National Catholic Church (P.N.C.C.) Scholars' Conference

After a lapse of 15 years, the P.N.C.C. Committee on History and Archives will resume conducting P.N.C.C. Scholars' Conferences. The next Conference will be held on October 23, 2021. Because of the uncertainty of gathering due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, it was decided to hold a virtual conference. It will be conducted via the Internet using the ZOOM software program, with the host location being the Frank Bednash Memorial Library on the second floor of the National Church Center of the P.N.C.C. in Scranton, PA.

A Call for Papers was sent to many members of the Academic community in the United States, Canada and Poland on July 14, 2020. A copy of the Call For Papers that was distributed via email is included at the end of this article. Six papers will be accepted. The presented papers will be published in an issue of P.N.C.C. Studies to be printed after the conference. It is hoped that the academic community in the United States, Canada and Poland will submit papers and make this a successful conference..

Some possible topics that could result in papers are:

Changes in the Constitution and Laws of the Polish National Catholic Church.

Elimination of Clerical Celibacy.

Creation and Life of the Lithuanian National Catholic Church.

Creation and Life of the Slovak National Catholic Church.

Creation and Life of the Italian National Catholic Church.

Diaconate Program of the Polish National Catholic Church.

Creation and Life of the Canadian Diocese.

Parish Mergers in the Polish National Catholic Church.

Creation and Life of a Spanish Speaking Parish in the Polish National Catholic Church.

Parish Histories

Polish (or other immigrant) populations in areas of a P.N.C.C. Parish

Independent religious movements in the US

Parish clashes with the hierarchy

Inspiration to the P.N.C.C. movement.

Leon Grochowski, the Second Prime Bishop of the Polish National Catholic Church.

Institution of the Word of God as a Sacrament of the Polish National Catholic Church.

The separation of the Missionary Diocese in Poland from the Polish National Catholic Church.

The 1924 General Synod held in Poland.

Rev. Bronisław Krupski, first missionary of the Polish National Catholic Church in Poland in 1919.

The attack on Bishop Hodur and Bishop Bończak while Mass was being conducted in Warsaw, Poland in 1926.

The Startup of The Polish National Union.

Polish language Newspapers in the United States and their reporting on the Polish National Catholic Church.

The last issue of P.N.C.C. Studies, number 20, was published in 1998. The P.N.C.C. Committee on History and Archives held Conferences in 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004 and 2005. The papers were not published in volumes of P.N.C.C. Studies. Many of the papers presented at these conferences will be published in P.N.C.C. Studies, numbers 21, 22 and perhaps 23. Each issue will have about 100 pages.

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(P.N.C.C. Scholars' Conference - Continued from Page 9.)

**CALL FOR PAPERS**  
**The Polish National Catholic Church**  
**COMMISSION ON HISTORY AND ARCHIVES**

is pleased to announce its  
**21<sup>st</sup> CONFERENCE OF SCHOLARS**  
 to be held virtually on  
**OCTOBER 23, 2021**

Academic and independent specialists and scholars in various related disciplines are invited to submit proposals for panels and individual papers devoted to the Polish National Catholic Church, its associations, its outreaches, and various independent movements that preceded or contemporaneous with the Church, and related subjects, by October 31, 2020, to be read, and subsequently published in

**P.N.C.C. STUDIES**  
 P.N.C.C. Commission on History and Archives  
 1006 Pittston Avenue, Scranton, PA 18505  
 Email: [Conference@PNCC.org](mailto:Conference@PNCC.org)



**POLISH NATIONAL UNION OF AMERICA**

*Presents*

**THE SECOND ANNUAL HEART & SOUL  
 REMEMBRANCE**

*In loving memory of Former PNU CEO Irene Jugan*

"...Be firm, steadfast, always fully devoted to the work of the Lord, knowing  
 that in  
 the Lord your labor is not in vain."  
 1 Corinthians 1:58

*The traditional Spójnia Sunday observance on  
 September 27, 2020, commemorating the historic  
 association of the PNU and Polish National Catholic  
 Church, will also include honoring the recipient of the  
 second annual PNU Irene Jugan Heart & Soul Award.*

**The second annual PNU Irene Jugan Heart & Soul Award will be presented to an individual who demonstrates the attributes of CEO Jugan, most notably her great love, enthusiasm, passion and devotion to the Polish National Union and the Polish National Catholic Church.**

**Nomination criteria:**

- Individual submitting a nomination must be a PNU and PNCC member.
- Individual being nominated must be a PNU and PNCC member.
- Individual being nominated must demonstrate the attributes of Former CEO Irene Jugan, most notably her love and dedication to both the Polish National Union and the Polish National Catholic Church, as well as her strength of character, resolution, kind and caring ways, and of course... her feisty spirit.

**Nominations must include the following information:**

- Name, address, and contact information (phone and email) for both the Nominee and the individual submitting the nomination
  - Name of parish the Nominee is a member of
  - List of PNU and PNCC organizations and activities the Nominee is/has served in and approximately the length of time, if known.
- A short 1-2 paragraphs explaining how the nominee demonstrates the attributes of Irene Jugan.
  - Nominations should be emailed to PNU Home Office, Attn: CFO John Andrzejewski, [executive02@pnu.org](mailto:executive02@pnu.org), received no later than September 15th, 2020
    - Recipient of the award will be selected by the PNU Board

***PNU members may submit their nominations from now until  
 September 15th, 2020***

## The P.N.C.C. History & Archives Commission Needs New Members

I am now 84 years old and I have been working at the Polish National Catholic Church [P.N.C.C.] Archives for 34 years. I am asking that a replacement for myself step forward while I am still relatively healthy enough to give him or her the benefit of the experience which I have gained over these years. If I am not replaced, I fear that the P.N.C.C. Archives will cease to exist. The P.N.C.C. Archives has never been a high participation activity. At General Synods, some people put their names on the sign-up sheet but are never heard from again; some others do show up and agree to do a task, but never complete it.

Anthony Mikovsky, Prime Bishop's father, and I became interested in the Archives after listening to a passionate plea by Mrs. Matylda Zurowska-Hudak at a Philadelphia Seniorate meeting in the 1980s asking for support. We talked about what she said many times. At the 17th General Synod in Manchester, New Hampshire in 1986, he and I put our names on the list to join the P.N.C.C. Archives Commission. We were accepted and worked together at the P.N.C.C. Archives until his death on Tuesday April 26, 2011. We traveled from Trenton, New Jersey to Scranton, Pennsylvania once per month spending 2 or 3 days per month. Since his death, I have been spending 4 to 6 days per month at the P.N.C.C. Archives.

Many projects are not being done because of the lack of people power. The Archives would like to have people who are knowledgeable on various aspects of the P.N.C.C. to help sort and catalog the documents and artifacts of Commissions, Committees, Societies and Sodalities that are in the P.N.C.C. Archives. The more knowledgeable that a person is, the easier the task becomes. It would also be helpful to the Church if there was a photograph of each parish building, exterior and interior, every altar and cemetery; and every member of the clergy, bishop, senior priest, priest, deacon and seminarian. Many photographs that are in the Archives are included in publications of the church such as, *Straż*, *Rola Boża*, and parish and diocesan anniversary books. These are low photographic quality and perhaps could be improved by a software program like Photoshop. A person who is able to use either this program or a like program would be helpful.

A continuing problem area of the Archives is that the minutes and records of all Commissions and Committees of the P.N.C.C. are not in the Archives. The

operation, accomplishments, and publications of these Commissions and Committees should be the bedrock of information in the P.N.C.C. Archives. With few exceptions, copies are not given to the Archives by their secretaries and consequently the holdings of the Archives are incomplete. A person who would be able to contact the secretaries of each Commission and Committee to acquire the missing documents would be helpful. The Commission did receive a CD of the minutes of the Supreme Council from Michael Mietlicki, its current secretary. The Commission also received copies of those of the Liturgical Commission from Very Rev. Robert M. Nemkovich, its current chair. The records of the Scouting Committee were scanned and stored onto a DVD. The previous chairman of the Scouting Commission, Richard Daum, has provided digitized records of this commission.

Another task that is currently not being done is to promulgate the concept of storage of Parish Documents in more than one location to protect their loss in fire or flood or closure of a church. The records of many of the missions and parishes that had a catastrophic fire or flood or were unable to become successful and subsequently closed have been lost to the Church.

Many tasks which would help getting the documents more available to researchers are yet to be completed. These include: Listing and digitizing the reports prepared for Synods and meetings of the Supreme Council; Identifying the locations of photographs of the Priests and Churches of the P.N.C.C.; Completing the scanning of the issues of *Rola Boża* (God's Field); Preparing an index for the issues of P.N.C.C. Studies from issue 13 through 20; Preparing digital versions of the issues of P.N.C.C. Studies; Making copies of the digitized versions of the Synods of the P.N.C.C. available for sale to the general public; Development and implementation of a plan to transfer files from 5 1/4 inch and 3 1/2 inch disks to CDs and DVDs. This would require using older computer hardware and knowing how to use older software; Providing more in-depth searches for answers to questions received at the National Church Center office.; Arranging for the purchase or rental of a microfilm scanner; Performing an evaluation of a database to be used for the holdings of the Archive; Development of a History and

(Continued on Page 12.)

(P.N.C.C. History & Archives - Continued from Page 11.)

Archives section of the P.N.C.C. Website [The Commission wants to make sure that a visitor can easily search the site and that no document installed on the website could be modified or changed by any visitor to the site].

### **Encyclopedia of the Polish National Catholic Church:**

I tried to start this project in 2008 but failed. It is something that should be done. All of us can call to mind being asked questions about the P.N.C.C. that we had a hard time answering. Having information about all aspects of the Church in one book would make our task easier.

As envisioned, the Encyclopedia of the P.N.C.C. would contain information on our: (1) theology and beliefs, (2) Masses, services and liturgical practices, (3) organizational structure, (4) parishes, both present and those that once were, (5) clergy; bishops, senior priests, priests, and deacons, and seminarians, (6) dioceses, their development, history and changes over the years, (7) mission activities in the United States, Poland, Canada, and Brazil, (8) ecumenical activities, (9) publications of and those about the P.N.C.C., (10) buildings and facilities constructed by the Church, those of parishes and dioceses, (11) relationships of the parishes developed by Bishop Kozłowski, by Bishop Kaminski and other Independent Polish Parishes which later became part of the P.N.C.C., (12) relationships and activities with non-church Polish organizations, (13) interchurch development, (14) charitable activities, (15) Spójnia Farm, (16) Polish National Union and (17) The Union of Scranton. Writers, reviewers, proof readers, fact checkers, section editors, index preparers and computer formatters are needed to make this book a reali-

ty. Help is needed to make this task a reality. It, along with the History of the P.N.C.C. prepared by the School of Christian Living, will be able to provide facts and help dispel rumors and false speculations about our Church.

### **Inquiries About the Polish National Catholic Church:**

The Archives have had many requests for information from people, some of whom are not members of the P.N.C.C. The Prime Bishop's secretary receives Contact Form submissions from the Polish National Catholic Church website which the Commission responds to. They included requests for information about clergymen who were thought to be members of the P.N.C.C., searches for parish records, locations and histories of parishes which have closed, requests for information about the record of dialogue meetings between the P.N.C.C. and the Episcopal Church, and requests from students who plan to write a paper about the P.N.C.C. The Archives are currently not able to provide all of the requested information because our records are incomplete. It would also take someone in the towns and cities to research local newspapers and government documents to gather the information requested.

I have tried to get members of the P.N.C.C. to become active in the work of the Commission at many Synods, both General and Diocesan. As you can see, there is much that can be done to ensure that our light is not placed under a bushel. Few people know of our Church and its accomplishments because of a lack of information being available. This is where the Archives could be an asset. Please become my replacement or at least an active member.

Joseph Francis Seliga,



## **Honor Your Father**

**August 2020**

Richard Urban, father, remembered by Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Urban and family

Rt. Rev. Paul Sobiechowski, friend, honored by Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Urban and family

Rt. Rev. John Mack, friend, honored by Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Urban and family

Rt. Rev. Jan Dawidziuk, former pastor, remembered by Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Urban and family

## Central Diocese

### Families from St. Stephen the Martyr Parish, Reading, PA, Make Donation to the 90 for 90 Campaign

For the past 56 years, generations of family members of St. Stephen the Martyr Parish in Reading, PA, have been spending a week at Spójnia Farm, and this year was no different. The parish first visited Spójnia Farm in the “old barracks” in 1964 under the guidance of Father Driscoll and leaders from the Y.M.S. of R.

In 2020 the Sabulsky, Golowski, Byassee, Wawrzonek, O'Donnell, Reed, Davies, Covingtons, and Torres Families still made the pilgrimage to Spójnia Farm. Most family members still reside in the Reading/Philadelphia Seniorate, but some travel from outside of Pennsylvania.

The week serves as an opportunity to reunite with family and friends. There is plenty of food, card games, and even made-up games that you just have to pick up on and go along with. The group is very friendly and not everyone is related, but they treat everyone as family. There are always new faces, old faces and the group still carries out the old traditions of the old barracks, such as KP, kickball and everyone's favorite, an evening around the fire. The group values their friends and family and is always reminiscing about the old days and the plans for next year's Spójnia Farm visit.

There is one person that has set a record as the oldest camper in Spójnia Farm History. Dolores Sabulsky is the oldest camper at 89 years young and has missed only a few years in the 56-year span. She has seen

the days of hay mattresses, the old swimming hole, the new pool in the 1980s and a new Retreat Center in 1990. In the year 2020 Delores enjoyed the new upgrades to the 30-year-old Bishop Hodur Retreat and Recreation Center and even took a dip in the pool this year on one of those hot July days! Delores takes advantage of the time to see her children, nieces, nephews, grandchildren and great grandchildren. Delores and family even watched Mass on Sunday morning, celebrated live by Fr. Jason Soltysiak from St. Mary's Parish in Parma, Ohio. The recent upgrades at the Retreat Center with WIFI, a projector, and projection screen made this possible. Mass was a cool 68 degrees in the air conditioning in the Commons Area of the Bishop Hodur Retreat Center.

Delores wasn't the only one who enjoyed the new upgrades. All of her great grandchildren enjoyed the recently constructed playground set, from morning to dusk.

The family was so impressed and grateful with the care and direction of the Spójnia, Inc. property that they surprised United Y.M.S. of R. President Nick Kazinetz with a \$1,000.00 donation to the 90 for 90 Campaign. The donation happened at dinner on the last night as the plans for next year's Spójnia Farm reunion were being put into place. The United Y.M.S. of R. Board is very thankful for the donation and the Spójnia, Inc. Board thanks all the families from Reading for their continued support.



## Holy Mother of Sorrows Parish Y.M.S. of R. Sponsor Annual Open Pit Chicken BBQ Dupont, PA

Holy Mother of Sorrows Parish Y.M.S. of R. conducted its Annual Open Pit Chicken BBQ on Saturday, July 18, 2020, on the Parish Grounds in Dupont, PA. The Y.M.S. of R. members, who sponsored this event, took all safety and health precautions due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

All volunteers were wore masks throughout the food preparation process, and their temperatures were tak-



en prior to working. Dinners were served as take-out only via curbside pickup, as established and regulated by the workers.

The whole event was a huge success. Everything was sold out by 4 PM. We would like to thank all volunteers and especially all of our patrons.

Submitted by Very Rev. Zbigniew Dawid



## Holy Mother of Sorrows Parish Hosts Tour of Historic Churches in Dupont, PA

The 15th Annual Tour of Historic Churches took place on Sunday, July 26 at Holy Mother of Sorrows P.N.C.C. in Dupont, PA. The tour was led by Jan Lokuta, a Dupont native who has been leading tours of anthracite area churches since 2006.

Very Rev. Zbigniew Dawid, pastor of Holy Mother of Sorrows Parish, spoke to the attendees about the importance of the Polish culture, traditions, customs

and religion in the life of Polish immigrants in the USA in perseverance of Polish identity and heritage. Parish organist, Jan Cwikla, played and sang some Polish religious and patriotic hymns and talked about the role of the music. The tour also visited Sacred Heart of Jesus Roman Catholic Parish in Dupont, PA, earlier in the day.

Submitted by Very Rev. Zbigniew Dawid



## First Holy Communion at Holy Mother of Sorrows Parish Dupont, PA

First Holy Communion was held on Saturday, August 1, 2020 at Holy Mother of Sorrows Parish, Dupont, PA. The children received the sacrament of penance the day before, on Friday, July 31, 2020.

First Communion recipients include: Layla Marks, Grace Morgan and Alexander Orluk. Very Rev. Zbigniew Dawid was the First Communion teacher.

Submitted by Very Rev. Zbigniew Dawid



## Eastern Diocese

### Blessed Trinity Parish Hosts Annual Neighborhood Watch Cookout

Fall River, MA

On Monday, July 13th, parishioners and friends of Blessed Trinity Parish in Fall River, MA, gathered for their annual Neighborhood Watch cookout - with social distancing. Fall River Mayor Paul Coogan and his wife, Judi, and Police Chief Cardoza, were also in attendance.

Thanks to Dave, our grill master; Rosemary our Neighborhood Watch president; Kathy for the beautiful setup; and to the attendees for providing food. It was a wonderful, relaxing and enjoyable evening of fellowship among friends and neighbors, and a chance for everyone to catch up with each other.

Submitted by Very Rev. Robert M. Nemkovich, Jr.



### Blessed Trinity Parish Partners with Neighborhood Associations to Thank Police

Fall River, MA

On Thursday, July 16<sup>th</sup>, Very Rev. Rob and Kathy Nemkovich represented Blessed Trinity Parish of Fall River, MA, as they partnered with four Fall River Neighborhood Associations (The Bank Street, Father Kelly, Flint and Niagara Neighborhood Associations) to provide a thank-you lunch for the entire Fall River

Police Department (about 60 folks with all the various staff and personnel).

It was good to show them appreciation and support as they continue to protect and serve the Fall River community.

Submitted by Very Rev. Robert M. Nemkovich, Jr.



**Western Diocese**

**Confirmation at San Juan Bautista Parish**

**Chicago, IL**

“Go therefore and teach all the nations” Matthew 28:19-20

Even during this Pandemic our Church is continuing its mission on earth. Following the direction of our Bishops, healthcare professionals, and the Federal Government authorities our parishes are reopened and the members and friends of the Church can worship God. Of course we want to be protected and we want to protect others as well during the time we are together in the church.

July 11<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> were very special Saturdays in the life of Parroquia San Juan Bautista in Chicago, IL. Bishop-Elect Jerry Rafalko, with the permission of Prime Bishop Anthony Mikovsky, administered the Sacrament of Confirmation for the young members of this parish.



*Through the Sacrament of Confirmation, these young persons received the spiritual seal, and the Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit to help them to be true and faithful Christians in their lives: the gifts of wisdom and understanding, the gifts of right judgment and courage, the gifts of knowledge and reverence, the gifts of holy fear in God's presence.*

The Sunday School teachers divided all the children for Confirmation in four groups. The first two groups received the Sacrament of Confirmation on Saturday, July 11<sup>th</sup> during the Holy Masses outside of the church. The pastor of this parish, Father Jose Rojas, and the members of the parish changed the parish parking lot into a beautiful area.

The second two groups received the Sacrament of Confirmation a week later on Saturday, July 18<sup>th</sup>. These two groups were little smaller and the celebration was prepared in the church inside. Strengthened by the Holy Spirit these young members of the church are ready to spread and defend their Catholic faith by word and action as true witnesses of Christ.



The photos on the following two pages show the four groups of the confirmands of Parroquia San Juan Bautista with Bishop-Elect Jerry Rafalko and pastor, Father Jose Rojas.

Submitted by Bishop-Elect Jerry Rafalko









If your parish is still not open for you to attend Mass, or if you are not feeling well or are physically unable to attend Mass in person, you can participate in Sunday Masses celebrated by Most Rev. Anthony Mikovsky, Prime Bishop of the Polish National Catholic Church, in the Chapel in the National Church Center in Scranton, PA, on our YouTube Channel, [PNCC Liturgies](#), or on our Facebook Page, [PNCC1](#), beginning at 7:00 a.m. every Sunday.

When viewing a Mass online, enhance the experience by adding a candle or two around the screen you're viewing; perhaps open a bible or prayer book next to it, along with a holy picture (icon), rosary, flowers or flower petals. Attire can be casual and comfortable, but respectful of the situation, unless you are bedridden. No food or drink should be consumed during Mass, just as you would not eat or drink if you were attending Mass at your parish church..

