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Christ is Risen, He is Risen Indeed

Most Rev. Anthony Mikovsky,
Prime Bishop

On the morning of Easter Sunday, as we gather to celebrate the triumph of our Lord, we hear the Gospel from Saint John concerning the earliest realization of the Resurrection. “Early in the morning on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb. She saw that the stone had been moved away, so she ran off to Simon Peter and the other disciple (the one Jesus loved) and told them, ‘The Lord has been taken from the tomb! We don’t know where they have put Him!’ At that, Peter and the other disciple started out on their way toward the tomb. They were running side by side, but then the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. He did not enter but bent down to peer in, and saw the wrappings lying on the ground. Presently, Simon Peter came along behind him and entered the tomb. He observed the wrappings on the ground and saw the piece of cloth which had covered the head not lying with the wrappings, but rolled up in a place by itself. Then the disciple who had arrived first at the tomb went in. He saw and believed. (Remember, as yet they did not understand the Scripture that Jesus had to rise from the dead.)” (John 20:1-9)

So much of this reading speaks to the way in which so many may approach the Resurrection of Jesus from the dead. Mary Magdalene had gone off to the tomb assuming that since she had watched Jesus die on the cross on Good Friday, His body would still be there. When she came to the tomb she noticed the stone rolled away. The Scriptures do not tell us that she went to look inside, but rather she immediately assumed the easiest explanation as well as a natural one. Maybe she did not take the time necessary to

consider the words that she had heard Jesus say throughout His ministry concerning His death and Resurrection. Rather she might have thought, if the stone was rolled away then grave robbers or possibly the Roman guard had come and certainly they would have taken the body.

She ran to tell Simon Peter and John. In response to this news they began to run to the tomb. I always smile when I see a small item in Scripture that could easily be overlooked, but rather points to the truth of all of Scripture. Here the Gospel tells us that John outran Peter to the tomb. We all know that John was one of the youngest Apostles, so it makes perfect sense that the young man would outrun the older man Peter if they had to go any significant distance.

When John got to the tomb, he bent down and noticed the wrappings of the body. We are not told what John was thinking at this moment, but he did not run away. Rather he was drawn to the tomb. The scene is interrupted by Simon Peter rushing up behind John. Peter immediately went into the tomb, he saw the wrapping as John did, but he also noticed the piece of cloth which covered the head rolled up and set in a place by itself. We also notice that John entered the tomb at this point and most likely would have noticed the rolled cloth as well.

Here we encounter the very powerful message concerning St. John, “he saw and believed.” Like most of the powerful messages of Scripture, we need to consider what exactly we are being told. As St. John was standing within the tomb, possible he began to think back to the words that Jesus had spoken

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throughout His entire ministry. He might have begun to consider the many miracles He performed. St. John also had the advantage of being with Jesus at the Transfiguration where he saw Jesus' glory revealed and also within the Garden of Gethsemane to witness Jesus' anguish of heart.

We notice here though that the confession of Jesus conquering death is not a full and complete one. The full measure of this confession would only grow as St. John, and many other followers of Jesus, would continue to encounter Him; in the breaking of bread in the Eucharist, in the community of disciples as they gathered together, in the continued preaching of Jesus as risen from the dead through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

The confession at the tomb is only a first beginning, but it is one that acknowledges that Jesus Christ is both truly God and truly man. It acknowledges that He died on the cross and has risen from the dead. St. John had been a witness to both of these events, and he continued throughout the rest of his life to share them with others through his life and his preaching.

My brothers and sisters, we too have the blessed opportunity to witness the death and resurrection of our Lord through the liturgy of our Holy Church. We will attend the services of Good Friday where the death of Jesus is presented to us. We will attend the morning Mass of Easter Sunday when those first words of Resurrection echo from our parish churches, "Come Rejoice our Lord is Risen." But we cannot go home satisfied that we have seen enough, it would be like St. John going off after witnessing the wrappings and empty tomb and saying that it was enough, that he needed no more.

Throughout the Book of Acts and through Catholic history we know that St. John and all of the apostles, as well as many others who were converted by their preaching, continued to encounter the Risen Christ in prayer, in Eucharist, through preaching and in the community (the Body of Christ) working together.

This opportunity is given to us today. During Holy Mass, the celebration of the Eucharist, Jesus still becomes present among us and offers Himself to us as food to sustain and strengthen us. When we work together as a parish community, the body of Christ, we bring Jesus into a world which so sorely needs His presence.

I hope that on Easter Sunday we will be able to cry out the traditional greeting of the Easter season, "Christ is Risen," with the answer, "He is Risen, indeed." But then we must also consider, will it be on our lips, if not in actually words, then at least in spirit for the weeks after and for the rest of our lives? The celebration of the Resurrection of Jesus, where we say with St. John that we "see and believe" should draw us to ever deeper encounters with Jesus Christ, our Lord and God. Now that we have seen Him conquer sin, death and the grave, now that we have seen Him rise to a new and glorious life, we must acknowledge that His way alone is the way to salvation. He has opened the door for us, but we must join Him on the journey, by living as He taught and following His way. We must follow up our confession that Jesus is Risen, our seeing and believing, with a life which is transformed by the Risen Christ. We must then be the ones who say with St. Paul, "It is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, Who loves me and gave Himself for me." (Gal 2:20)

To my brother bishops, the Very Rev. and Rev. Fathers, the Deacons and all my brothers and sisters within our Holy Church, I wish you a truly joyous and fulfilling Easter. As we together announce to the world that Christ is risen, may we continue to nurture His presence within our hearts and within our lives and share it with our families, our friends and our communities and especially within the Church as we build each other up in the faith that Jesus lives.

Christ is Risen. He is Risen, Indeed.



The Resurrection, Our Hope and Life

Most Rev. John F. Swantek, Prime Bishop Emeritus

On the days prior to the resurrection, Jesus and His followers celebrated the Last Supper on the day of Passover. After they finished the Paschal meal, the group went to the Garden of Gethsemane to spend the night. It was here that a contingent of soldiers led by Judas arrested Jesus and took Him to the home of the high priest where He was tried. In the morning our Lord was taken to Pontius Pilate, the governor, who after a period of investigation sentenced Him to death, even though he believed that Jesus was innocent. Following a merciless scourging, our Savior in a weakened state had to take His heavy cross and carry it to Golgotha, the place of execution. He was nailed to the cross on which He died an excruciating death, after hanging there for several hours. To be sure that our Lord was dead, a soldier pierced His side with a lance. Having received permission, Joseph of Arimathea took down the lifeless body of Jesus from the cross and placed it in the tomb. Soldiers were ordered to stand guard so that no one could steal the body of our Lord.

It was a gloomy morning as the women with their spices went to the burial place to complete the funeral practices on the body. Because of the Sabbath on Friday, they could not complete what had to be done. They were filled with grief as they approached the tomb. They experienced the sadness which many have at the death of a loved one or friend. They thought that they would never see Him again, hear Him preach, talk with Him. All they could do now was reminisce about the past times they spent with Him. It all ended on that infamous gibbet. Even though they heard Him speak about His resurrection, they did not fully understand what He meant.

When these followers finally arrived at the place where our Lord's lifeless body lay, they were startled to discover that the large stone placed at the entrance to the tomb was rolled away and the entrance was open. "What had happened?" they must have asked themselves. Who did this?

Their mood was about to change one hundred-eighty degrees as they cautiously went into the burial place. Lo and behold, there was a young man in white robes, and he said to the women: "Do not be afraid! You seek Jesus of Nazareth, the crucified. He has been raised. He is not here. Go tell the disciples."

They were dumbfounded, as you and I might have been if we were there that morning.

These women were the first to receive the truth of Christ's resurrection, the first to spread the news of this cosmic event. He is alive! When the women told the disciples what they experienced at the tomb, at first they were reluctant to believe what they heard. They had to go and see for themselves.

The resurrection is the basic teaching of the Christian faith, as St. Paul states. From this day on, our Lord was seen by His disciples and many others. From that morning to the present that announcement made by the women that Christ, Who had been crucified has been raised, is still being made. The ways of God may seem unbelievable, but this simply shows our human limitation. If you told men 500 years ago that man would walk on the moon, that the earth was round and not flat, that men would fly in airplanes, you probably would receive uncomplimentary remarks. They might say, "Incredible," or just laugh at you.

When we say the Nicene Creed at Mass, we profess the eternal truths of Christ's Church: "On the third day He rose again in fulfillment of the Scriptures. I look for the resurrection of the dead and life of the world to come." These are the principle teachings of our Church. Our Lord's resurrection from the dead is the most important teaching of Christianity. Regarding this truth St. Paul wrote: "If Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sin...But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead." (I Cor. 15:17, 20)

On Easter we are commemorating this great event which will affect each and every one of us. In addition we are celebrating our own future resurrection and eternal life. About this our Lord said, "I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die." (John 11:25,26). When we receive Holy Communion Jesus promises: "Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood have eternal life, and I will raise them up on the last day." (John 6:54)

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Are You Going to Help Me?

Rt. Rev. John Mack, Bishop Ordinary - Buffalo-Pittsburgh Diocese

A number of years ago a series of books entitled “Chicken Soup for the . . .” became popular. One was “Chicken Soup for the Christian Soul.” I remember reading a story about an earthquake in Armenia in 1989 and the story of a father who would not give up hope of finding his son alive. The son and many classmates had been trapped in their school during the earthquake. The father rushed to the scene, only to be told that it was hopeless; the children had perished. He began digging by hand, brick by brick, never giving up hope. He had told his son, “No matter what, I’ll always be there for you.” Other well-meaning parents tried to pull him off of what was left of the school. “They’re dead – you can’t help them – go home!” The fire chief showed up and tried to pull him off of the school’s debris saying, “Fires are breaking out, explosions are happening everywhere. You’re in danger. We’ll take care of it. Go Home.” To which this loving, caring Armenian father asked, “**Are you going to help me now?**” No one helped. Courageously he proceeded alone because he needed to know for himself: “Is my boy alive or dead?” He dug for 8 hours . . . 12 hours . . . 24 hours . . . 36 hours - then in the 38th hour, he pulled back a boulder and heard his son’s voice. He screamed his son’s name, “**ARMAND!**” He heard back, “Dad? It’s me, Dad! I told the other kids not to worry. I told them that if you were alive, you’d save me and when you saved me, they’d be saved.”

This story of heroism, of faith and a promise kept by a father to a son, has so many ties with our Lenten sojourn and our Easter celebration. When I imagine the picture of such a catastrophe, the words from the fifth stanza of the opening hymn of “Bitter Lamentations” (Gorzkie Żale) come to mind: “**Rocks and cliffs and mountains crumbling, Tombs break open, loudly thundering.**” Although I have never experienced a full-fledged earthquake, I can only imagine that these words describe what it would be like. Another parallel between this story and that of the resurrection was the amount of time that transpired. Armand and his classmates were uncovered in the 38th hour. Christ died “in the ninth hour” (3 PM) on Good Friday and we celebrate His resurrection early on Easter Sunday. The time transpired is approxi-

mately 39 hours. Many of the parents had given up hope of ever seeing their children alive again. Most of the followers of Christ had also given up all hope of Jesus’ resurrection when they laid Him in the tomb. They had heard the words of Christ: “I will not leave you orphaned; I will come back to you.” (John 14:18) You will suffer in the world. But take courage! I have overcome the world.” (John 16:33)

But had they **understood**? Had they **believed**? Christ’s Easter message to us is that of **New Life and New Beginnings**. Where we were once trapped in tombs of our own — some self-made, some placed upon us — we are now free again. An Easter Hymn speaks these words: *The powers of death have done their worst, but Christ their legions hath dispersed: Let shouts of holy joy outburst. Alleluia!*

For some Christians, Easter is only a momentary event that comes once a year. A time to gather in Church, sing the hymns, buy a new outfit or hat. Their faith is heightened and uplifted for a moment, but returns to the “status quo” shortly thereafter. Christ, however, certainly asks us for more. He is like the Armenian father, who when told there is **NO HOPE** simply asks, “Are you going to help me now?” Christ asks this same question of us, not only at Easter, but every day of our lives. “**Are you going to help Me build My Church?**” The world is full of situations in which people feel as if they have a ton of debris and rubble caving in on them. We need only to read the daily headlines or listen to the evening news to be affected. We cower in fear over the next school shooting. We wonder if global annihilation is just around the corner. Christ calls out: “Are you going to help Me now?” Perhaps in your own life situation, you have experienced grief, loneliness, loss of family or loved ones, unemployment and disappointment. The ravages of drugs and opioids have left no community unscathed. Christ calls us to help ourselves by believing in Him and His Resurrection. But we have to dig for that faith and belief, stone by stone, hour by hour, prayer by prayer, tear by tear, moment by moment.

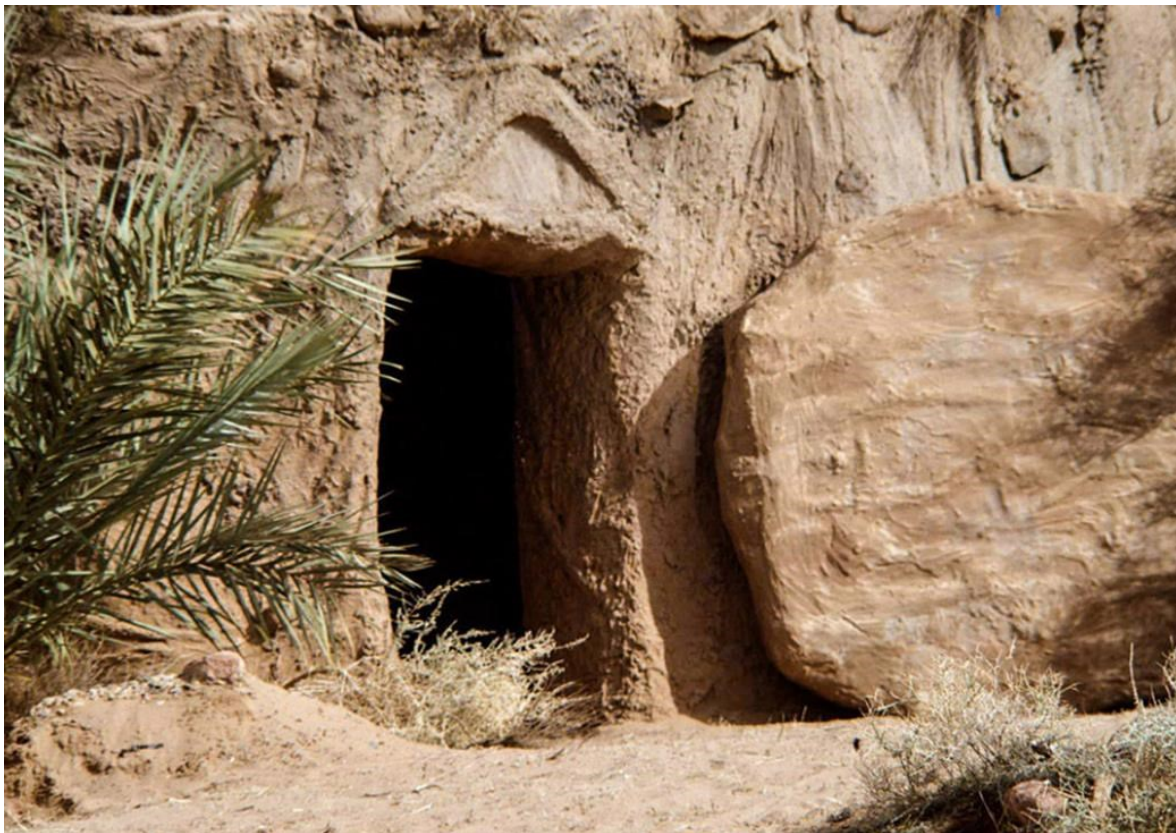
The words of the trusting son are so poignant – they should be ours as well. “I told them, that if you were (Continued on Page 6.)

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alive, you'd save me and when you saved me, they'd be saved." The executioners of Jesus scoffed at Him, saying: "He saved others, let Him save Himself!" And that's just the point; He cared more about us than He did about His own life! Jesus, the very Son of God, obeyed the Father's plan, and He simply asks that we obey as well. Jesus Christ, God's Risen Son **IS** alive and He still comes today to save you and to save me. The Risen Christ walks the streets of our community, looking for all who are lost and hurting. As Christians, Christ simply asks us to point others in the right direction so that they may find this Risen Christ as well. We accomplish this through our daily walk with Him; our obedience to His will for our lives; our witnessing to those we encounter on a daily basis.

Jesus, in His great love for mankind, found a way to redeem mankind, offering to all the chance of eternal life with God. This eternal life is not just reserved for us once we leave this earth and hopefully go to heaven. No, resurrected life is for now, not for some distant day in the future. Every day spent on this earth promises resurrected life until the day we are called home to meet our Father face to face. There is no situation that is too hopeless, no circumstance that is unchangeable, no relationship that cannot be brought back to wholeness and completeness. The Power of the Resurrection is an unstoppable force for it is the power of God. My Easter prayer for you is that you may tap into this power and it may change you completely!

Wesołego Alleluja – Christ is Risen – He is Indeed Risen Alleluia!



(The Resurrection, Our Hope and Life - Continued from Page 4.)

On Easter Sunday the Church begins the procession when the celebrant intones "Come rejoice our Lord is risen." In this liturgical celebration we will experience the presence of our resurrected Lord Who is present in the Blessed Sacrament. He is present in the community of worshipers. He is present in the Holy Scriptures. When one receives Holy Communion, one receives the Resurrected Christ, and His promise

of our own resurrection and eternal life. In the Preface of the Mass, the celebrant sings: "Through His death He conquered death for us and by His resurrection He restores eternal life to us." Because Christ lives, we also will live.

May you have a most Happy Easter and may the Resurrected Christ rise up in your life!

Christ is risen! Indeed He is risen!

We Are Witnesses

Rt. Rev. Paul Sobiechowski, Bishop Ordinary - Eastern Diocese

"We are witnesses to all that He did both in Judea and in Jerusalem. They put Him to death by hanging Him on a tree; but God raised Him on the third day and allowed Him to appear, not to all the people but to us who were chosen by God as witnesses, and who ate and drank with Him after He rose from the dead. He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that He is the one ordained by God as judge of the living and the dead. All the prophets testify about Him that everyone who believes in Him receives forgiveness of sins through His Name." (Acts 10: 37-43 NRSV, First Reading, Easter Sunday)

Easter is a celebration of the Resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. However, the Scripture excerpt that forms the First Reading of the Mass of Easter refers to Jesus only in the third person. One would expect Jesus to be spoken of by Name, particularly since the excerpt concludes with the words "...through His Name."

But the use of the third person draws attention to the beginning of the scriptural excerpt, **"We are witnesses."** Luke used this literary means to emphasize the role the apostles and followers of our Lord play in the Resurrection story. The excerpt from Acts speaks of the disciples, "those who ate and drank with Him," as witnesses. But in truth, we all eat and drink Him, the Perfect Offering, in the form of Bread and Wine. Luke is reminding us that **we** are His witnesses; witness to His death and Resurrection.

Most of us have got the "celebration" part. You could even say we excel in it. Come from a Polish background and Easter Sunday meal is kielbasa, barszcz, babka, eggs, ham, and horseradish. Brothers, sisters, aunts, uncles, and cousins gather for a day of family joy that's followed by the pails of water thrown on one another on Easter Monday, also known as "Dyngus Day." If you are English or American there's the Easter Egg Hunt, chocolate eggs and bunnies and peeps. Whatever your ethnic background, a Christian knows how to celebrate Easter.

All the early Christians celebrated Easter too, including the Apostles whose stories of rejoicing occupy the later chapters of all the Gospels. They gathered in the Upper Room, they discussed between themselves on the road to Emmaus. One can only imagine the smiles on their faces when Thomas came to believe. They rejoiced at the presence of the Lord Who was with them for forty days. He met, Scripture tells us, with as many as two hundred disciples at once. Oh yes ... they rejoiced!

Then came the descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost and the Apostles and disciples got down to the busi-

ness of witnessing. We modern-day Christians are right there with our Christian ancestors on the celebrating and rejoicing part. How are we doing with the second part, the "witnessing" part? The Holy Spirit has filled us with His gifts at Baptism and at Confirmation. We have all the tools in our pockets necessary to accomplish the task of witnessing. We even know what we have to say from the "Acts" excerpt: *"They put Him to death by hanging Him on a tree; but God raised Him on the third day and allowed Him to appear, not to all the people but to us who were chosen by God as witnesses, and who ate and drank with Him after He rose from the dead. He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that He is the one ordained by God as judge of the living and the dead. All the prophets testify about Him that everyone who believes in Him receives forgiveness of sins through His Name."*

We need to witness and this is the message we need to share. Tell the people you meet and share time with that we ate and drank with Him at Holy Mass. Tell them that the world tried to kill Him but He rose from the dead. Tell them He appears to us every time we share in Holy Mass. Tell them that Jesus is the one ordained by God as judge of the living and the dead. Tell them that the way we live our lives does matter. Tell them that everyone who lives and believes in Jesus receives complete and total forgiveness of all their sins through His Name.

It is a message fewer and fewer people are proclaiming because they fear either ridicule or estrangement or rejection or loss of friends or material things. But Luke is telling us that what we have to witness about is greater than anything that could happen to us and it is a sharing of the greatest gift humankind has ever received. God has given this in Jesus Christ and we are the instruments by which God makes this gift known. You are a witness, we Polish National Catholics are all witnesses and God has commanded us to

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Easter Greeting

Rt. Rev. Stanley Bilinski, Bishop Ordinary - Western Diocese

My dear Easter people,

We have arrived at the pinnacle of our annual journey. Easter is upon us and it is the cause of our joy! Her customary greeting to each other during this holy season is, "Christ is risen!" And the response joyfully given is, "He is risen indeed!" Even in the context of those words there are centuries and centuries of study, reflection, examination, culminating in the truth that is found even in the English translation of the phrase from the Polish, "zmartwychwstał," (He stood up from death). What an astounding statement! What a remarkable statement of faith that this Jesus, the Messiah, the long expected, stood up from death to continue His walking on our journey.

Amidst this time of feasting and rejoicing, with the keeping of traditions, the sharing of family and friends, I remind you of the Easter message given by the "Golden mouthed one," St. John Chrysostom:

Devout and God-loving people, enjoy this kind and bright festival. Wise people, come and share joy with your Lord. You, who have laboured in fasting, receive your deserved reward. You, who have laboured from the first hour, come to the festival now! You, who came at the third hour, rejoice! You, who lingered until the sixth hour, celebrate! You, who came at the ninth hour, do not be sad! You, who managed to come only at the eleventh hour, do not be dismayed by your lateness. No-one will be deprived of heavenly joy. For our Lord is generous. He welcomes those who come last in the same way as those who come first. He is grateful to the first and rejoices in the last. He consoles those who came at the last hour, as if they had laboured from the first hour. He gives to everyone: those who laboured and those who wanted to labour. He receives the service and kisses the intention. He values the deed and praises the desire. All of you enter into the joy of the Lord: First and last, receive the reward! Wealthy and poor, rejoice with one another! Diligent and lazy, celebrate the festival! Those who have fasted and those who have not, be glad together. The feast is abundant, eat your fill! All of you enjoy the wealthy banquet of the faith and mercy of God. Let no-one go away hungry or offended. Let no-one be sad about their poverty, for the kingdom is now here for everyone. Let no-one weep

over their sins, for forgiveness for all has burst with light from the grave. Let no-one be afraid of death, for the death of Jesus has freed us all. ... Christ is risen, and you are brought down. Christ is risen, and the demons have fallen. Christ is risen, and the angels rejoice. Christ is risen, and life triumphs. Christ is risen, and there are no dead in the grave. Christ has risen from the dead, become the firstborn of those who sleep and set into motion the resurrection of all. To Him be glory now and forever. Amen!"

I believe that each of us can find ourselves somewhere in that astounding statement given to us by the Saint. But again, amidst our reveling and feasting, there might be some we know who either have no idea of the grace and power that our Jesus has given us or feel unworthy to receive it. I would hope and pray, dear reader, that this is not you. If we examine the excerpt of the Easter sermon by Chrysostom we again find categories into which we all may fall. Jesus resurrected not for a particular group of people, or a particular time. However, Jesus did so for a particular place — the Church. It is within this community of faith that Jesus burst from the grave and came to gather those to whom he wished this power and grace would be shared.

The celebration of Easter this year falls within our Church's focus, given to us by the Future Direction Subcommittee, "the year of the family." It is then to the family of the Church that this celebration is indeed directed. It is the love of Jesus for His Church that is poured over each of us. How often do we look at our nuclear family and believe it to be an integral part of our parish family; which then is an integral part of our national Church family; which then is an integral part of the world Church family? It is indeed humbling to think as we celebrate in our own family, in our Church family, in our national Church family, we join with all those who believe that this love, this overpowering, that Jesus brings us that we observe in this our celebration of His life, our family's life, our Church's life.

I hope to pray that we are all united throughout all the parishes of our Holy Church for it is to this family

that Jesus lives. I am reminded of a bit that I read from one of the truly spiritual folk I have met along my journey, Mike Yaconelli. He writes: *“The religious leaders of the day had written the script for the Messiah. When Jesus announced He was the Messiah, the Pharisees and others screamed at Him, There is no Jesus in the Messiah script. Messiahs do not hang out with losers. Our Messiah does not break all the rules, Our Messiah does not question our leadership or threaten our religion or act so irresponsibly. Our Messiah does not disregard his reputation, befriend riffraff, or frequent the haunts of questionable people.”* Jesus' reply? *“This Messiah does!”* Do you see why Christianity is called “good news”? Christianity proclaims that it is an equal-opportunity faith, open to all, in spite of the abundance of playwrights in the church who are more than anxious to announce, *There is no place for you in Christianity if you [wear an ear-ring/have a tattoo/drink wine/have too many questions/look weird/smoke/dance/haven't been filled with the Spirit/aren't baptized/swear/have pink hair/are in the wrong ethnic group/have a nose ring/are gay or lesbian/are too conservative or too liberal].* Perhaps this may be a modern reflection on the sermon given by Chrysostom. Are there those who are not celebrating with us that perhaps fall into one of those categories above and have fallen away and do not know the joy, peace, love and grace that is available to them within our community? Should our

celebrations be those where this joy, peace, love and grace pours out into our communities and allows in those who are in need of this fantastic faith?

It is my prayer that we more strongly embrace this resurrected life that Jesus offers us. It is my prayer that we share this truth more intimately in our nuclear family; that we realize the abilities we've been given, reflecting on this resurrected life, in our parish family. And I also pray that we as a National Church family realize the potential that we have in sharing this reality of our faith to bring those searching for Jesus within our midst.

May I, with the entire community of the Western Diocese, share with our Prime Bishop, the Diocesan Bishops, clergy and faithful of the Polish National Catholic Church, and our ecclesial partners the greetings for a glorious Eastertide!

Mogę z całą wspólnotą Diecezji Zachodniej z udziałem premiera naszego pierwszego biskupa, biskupów diecezjalnych, duchowieństwa i wiernych naszego kościoła i naszych partnerów kościelnych pozdrowienia dla wspaniałej wielkanocnym!

¿Puedo con toda la comunidad de la cuota Diócesis Occidental con nuestro primer Obispo, los Obispos diocesanos, sacerdotes y fieles de la Iglesia Católica Nacional Polaca, y nuestros socios eclesiales los saludos para una gloriosa Pascua!



(We Are Witnesses - Continued from Page 7.)

witness. And may God's will be done. The old and traditional Polish greeting of Easter that people would say to one another sums up our Easter witnessing message. *Chrystus Zmartwychwstał! Prawdziwie Zmartwychwstał!* (Jesus Christ is risen. He is risen indeed!).

Rejoice, be bold, and share the joy with everyone this Easter Sunday and every day. Tell the people at Target, K-Mart, Walmart; Fenway Park, Gillette Stadium, T.D. Garden; at school, at work, everywhere: “Jesus Christ is Risen! He is risen indeed!”



Annual Easter Greetings



He is risen!
Death could not hold Him!
Supreme Council of the P.N.C.C.

Prime Bishop Emeritus Robert and Florence Nemkovich
Cape Coral, Florida
We wish everyone a Happy and Blessed Easter!

Happy Easter!
Michael R. & Mary A. Gorgol Mietlicki
Scotch Plains, NJ

May our resurrected Lord bless you!
Clergy Circle of the Western Diocese
Bishop Stanley Bilinski, Priests and Deacons

Adoration Society of Holy Trinity Cathedral, Manchester, NH
Susan Bodner, President
Alleluia! Christ is risen!

Eastern Diocese United Women's Societies
Very Rev. Paul Sobiechowski, Diocesan Bishop
Rt. Rev. Joseph Soltysiak, Chaplain

Polish National Union District Six
Christine Wachna - District Director, Officers and Members
Happy Easter!

Spójnia Credit Union
www.spojniacreditunion.org
Happy Easter!

The tomb is empty! Alleluia!
All Saints Parish, Sterling Heights, MI
Fr. Robert Fredrickson, Pastor

Blessed Trinity Parish — Fall River, MA
Very Rev. Robert M. Nemkovich, Jr., Pastor
Christ is risen! He is risen indeed!

Easter Blessings — Wesołego Alleluja!
Church of Resurrection, Greenpoint, Brooklyn, NY
Fr. Andrzej Koterba and Parish Committee

Divine Providence Parish, Norwich, CT
Rev. Christopher Rogalski
Have a blessed Easter!

May the Spirit of the Lord fill your home this Easter
and all the rest of your days. Rev. Antulio Alvarado,
Administrator, Divine Word Parish, Chicago, IL

Guardian Angel Parish, Los Angeles, CA
Fr. Andrew Machowski
Chrystus Zmartwychwstał, Prawdziwie Zmartwychwstał!

Holy Cross Parish, Johnstown, PA
Fr. Paul Zomerfeld, Pastor
Alleluia! Christ is Risen!

Holy Cross Parish, Ware, MA
Very Rev. Fryderyk S. Banas, Pastor
A joyous and blessed Easter to all!

Wesołego Alleluja! Happy Easter!
Holy Cross P.N.C.C. — Hamtramck, MI
Very Rev. Jaroslaw A. Nowak and Parish

Holy Cross Parish — Central Falls, RI
Very Rev. Robert M. Nemkovich, Jr., Pastor
His not here. He is risen! Alleluia!

Christ has risen. Christ has risen indeed!
Holy Family Parish
1921 Eden Park Blvd., McKeesport, PA 15132

Holy Mother of Sorrows Parish, Dupont, PA
Very Rev. Zbigniew Dawid, Pastor
Happy and Blessed Easter!

Holy Mother of the Rosary Cathedral
Rt. Rev. John E. Mack — Pastor
Jesus, my Lord, is risen indeed!

Holy Trinity Cathedral, Manchester, NH
Rt. Rev. Paul Sobiechowski
Rejoice! He is risen!

Holy Trinity Cathedral, 166 Pearl St, Manchester, NH
Pastor, Bp. Paul Sobiechowski; Chair, Raymond Pieczarka; Vice-chair, Stefan Swiadas;
Rec. Sec., Jo-Ann O'Connell Fin. Sec., Nancy Reilly; Treasurer, Frances C. Dobosz

Błogosławieństwa na Wielkanoc
Holy Trinity P.N.C.C., Plantsville, CT
Very Rev. Joseph Krusienski, Pastor

Holy Trinity P.N.C.C., Throop, PA
Very Rev William Chromey
Alleluia, Christ is risen!

Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Parish, Lilly, PA
Rev. Dr. Scott J. Lill, Pastor
Alleluia! Christ is risen!



Annual Easter Greetings (cont'd.)



Our Lord's Ascension Parish, Bethlehem, PA
 Rev. Bogdan Yurchishin
 Happy Easter! Wesołych Świąt Zmartwychwstania Pańskiego!

Our Savior Chapel, Tripp Park, Scranton, PA
 The Right Rev. Bernard J. Nowicki, Pastor
 Alleluia — Christ is risen!

Our Savior Parish
 610 N. Beech Daly Road., Dearborn Heights, MI 48127
 Pastor — Rev. John Cramer

Our Savior Parish, New Chicago, IN
 Rev. John P. Kowalczyk, Jr. — Administrator
 Wesołego Alleluja! Christ is risen!

Our Saviour's Parish, Woonsocket, RI
 Rev. Henry K. Vos, Pastor
 Wesołego Alleluja!

St. Casimir's Parish, Lowell, MA
 Rev. Andrzej Tenus, Pastor
 Blessed Easter!

St. John the Baptist Parish, Frackville, PA
 Rev. Robert Plichta, Pastor
 Alleluia! Christ is risen!

St. John's Parish — Toronto
 Augustina Domagala — Parish Chair
 Wesołego Alleluja!

Saint Joseph's Mission Parish, Fairhope, PA
 Rejoice: Our Lord has risen!
 Rev. Felix Pyzowski and parish members

Wishing you a joyous Easter season!
 St. Mary Parish — South Bend, Indiana
www.stmarypncc.org

Wesołego Alleluja! Christ is risen!
 St. Michael the Archangel Parish
 Cedar Lake, IN

St. Paul Parish, Belleview, Florida
 Rev. Fr. Mark J. Niznik, Pastor
 Snow birds have left, come visit!

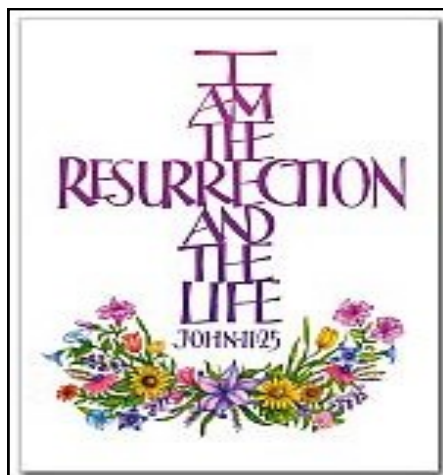
St. Stephen's Parish
 Reading, PA
 Very Rev. Edward D. Ratajack

St. Valentine Parish, Northampton, Massachusetts
 Rev. Adam Czarnecki, Pastor
 Życzenia Radosnych Świąt Wielkanocnych!

STS Cyril & Methodius Parish
 5744 W. Diversey Ave., Chicago, IL 60639
 Christ is risen! Alleluia!

He is risen! He is risen indeed!
 The Church of Our Saviour, Lawrenceville, NJ
 Fr. Donald E. Wunderlich

Happy Easter!
 The P.N.C.C. of Holy Trinity & St. Joseph
 Linden, NJ



International Catholic Bishops Conference of the Union of Scranton
A Union of Churches in Communion with the Polish National Catholic Church

OVERVIEW OF THE
CONVOCATION FOR RESTORATION AND RENEWAL OF THE UNDIVIDED CHURCH:
THROUGH A RENEWED CATHOLICITY

EMMAUS CENTRE - DUBLIN, IRELAND
MARCH 6-8, 2018



The Union of Scranton (the Polish National Catholic Church and the Nordic Catholic Church) hosted a Convocation for Restoration and Renewal of the Undivided Church: Through a renewed Catholicity.

The purpose of this gathering was to invite selected bishops, mostly from Anglo Catholic Churches in the United States and Africa, and a representative of the Ecumenical Patriarch, to discuss the preservation and the strengthening of ecumenical catholicity within non-papal aligned traditions. Confronted with the present crisis of faith, the desired goal is to create the foundation blocks for a united witness so that the doctrinal and historical coherence can be saved for the future. It is our conviction that Old Catholicism, based on "The undivided faith of the first millennium," stands out as the best platform to address not only the crisis of faith but also the present challenges from aggressive secularism and militant Islam.

In this call to restoration and catholicity, possible paths for such a restoration were examined with the following presentations given in this order:

- Very Rev. Robert M. Nemkovich Jr. of the Polish National Catholic Church:
Introduction to the Convocation: The Polish National Catholic Church and the Declaration and Union of Scranton
- Bishop Roald Nikolai Flemestad of the Nordic Catholic Church:
Moving Forward in the Spirit Towards a Renewed Catholicity
- Prime Bishop Anthony Mikovsky of the Polish National Catholic Church:
Old Catholicism, the Nature and Promise of the Union of Scranton
- Bishop Kevin Donlon of Diocese of Dunkwa (Province of the Anglican Communion):
Ecclesiology at the Crossings: Developing Hybrid Ecclesial Models for an Ecumenical Catholicity in the 21st Century

Twenty participated in this Convocation from the P.N.C.C., Nordic Catholic Church, Missionary Diocese of All Saints, ACNA, Diocese of the Holy Cross, Diocese of Dunwka (Anglican Communion Africa), Anglican Mission in America, the Missionary province in Sweden and the G4. After the presentations, time was spent in small break-out groups to discussion the papers and find consensus to move forward towards a renewed ecumenical catholicity. The formal papers presented can be found on the Union of Scranton Website: TheUnionofScranton.org.

A Convocation Prayer adapted by Fr. Geoffrey Neal from William Laud was offered during Morning and Evening Prayer:

*Gracious Father, we humbly beseech Thee for Thy Holy Catholic Church;
fill it with all truth, in all truth with all peace.*

*Where it is corrupt, purge it; where it is in error, direct it,
where it is superstitious, rectify it; where anything is amiss, reform it;
where it is right, strengthen and confirm it; where it is in want, furnish it;
where it is divided and rent asunder, make up the breaches of it,
O thou Holy One of Israel, for the sake of our Saviour Jesus Christ.*

The official statement of the Convocation from the Union of Scranton, agreed to by all who participated therein, appears on page 15.





Very Rev. Robert M. Nemkovich, Jr.



Bishop Roald Nikolai Flemestad



Most Rev. Anthony Mikovsky's Presentation



Bishop Kevin Donlon's Presentation

A Call to Missional and Ecumenical Fellowship

-March 8, 2018-

The Great Commission

And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age." – (Matthew 28:18-20)

Leaders from the Polish National Catholic Church and the Nordic Catholic Church under the Union of Scranton invited Anglican Leaders representing various Churches and Provinces along with The Mission Province of Sweden, gathering in Dublin, Ireland March 6-8 for a Convocation for the Restoration and Renewal of the Undivided Church through a renewed Catholicity.

During this Convocation those attending heard presentations on Moving Forward in the Spirit Towards a Renewed Catholicity - based on Pauline Ecclesiology; The Polish National Catholic Church and the Declaration and Union of Scranton; Old Catholicism, the Nature and Promise of the Union of Scranton and Ecclesiology at the Crossings. (For the texts presented go to: TheUnionofScranton.org)

Through the history and formation of the Polish National Catholic Church and the Nordic Catholic Church, attendees were introduced to the Union of Scranton which binds these two Churches, and any other jurisdictions that may join the Union in the future, in full Communion. A presentation was also made reflecting the current state of relationships between Anglican Churches in the world today. The Church leaders present affirmed their mutual reception of the Old and New Testaments as the revealed Word of God; the Ecumenical Creeds; the Historic Episcopate; and the historic liturgies of the Western Church.

Moreover these leaders whose heritage rests with the historic catholic faith of the undivided church have recognized and affirmed in Dublin the essentials of common doctrine, discipline, and worship as represented in Statements of our traditions such as the Lambeth Quadrilateral 1888, the Declaration of Utrecht 1889, the Bonn Agreement 1931, Road to Unity 1987, the Porvoo Statement, 1992 (sections 32 a-l) and the Declaration of Scranton 2008.

Therefore as a result of our call to seek a renewed catholicity based on the undivided Church, the fellowship in Christ we share and the Standards of Faith that we each cherish and safeguard among us, we pledge....

- 1) To enter into a process whereby a delegation of observers from each ecclesial body may be sent to participate in each other's Convocations, Conferences and/or Synods.
- 2) To mutual dialogue, study and implementation of common missional objectives in our countries to the non-Christian and post-Christians found in the post-modern western world.
- 3) To each explore practical and pastoral missional objectives that each of these ecclesial entities could explore for a mission partnership that would advance the cause of the Gospel in their settings, through discipleship, stewardship, and ministry training.
- 4) To work together in the same great purpose of the Great Commission of Christ, and on the same basis, pledging to each other our mutual cooperation and support by agreeing to foster growing fellowship and commitment to find a path for a renewed ecclesial community based in principles of ecumenical catholicity among our ecclesiastical leaders through joint prayer, study, conferences, mission and ecumenical initiatives and worship services, along with other godly activities.

We look forward to a second gathering next spring hosted by the Polish National Catholic Church in Scranton, Pennsylvania. In the meantime, we will engage each other to continue our conversation as per point two above.

We are scheduling a second gathering for April 23-25, 2019 in Scranton, Pennsylvania.

Respectfully submitted in Christ,

Very Rev. Robert M. Nemkovich Jr.

Ecumenical Officer,

Polish National Catholic Church

Church-wide Clothing Collection Concludes

The National Young Men's Society of the Resurrection (Y.M.S. of R.) of the Polish National Catholic Church, at its last biennial Convention held at All Saints Parish in Sterling Heights, MI, voted to hold a P.N.C.C.-wide clothing drive for the 2017-2018 winter season.

It is the second year in a row that this was undertaken. Information was sent out to all parishes in the Polish National Catholic Church, asking them to participate in something Church-wide but locally-served. Though a tally of the total clothes collected (along with a picture or two) was requested by the National Y.M.S. of R., it was then asked that the clothing be distributed locally to a group that provides a clothing ministry in each participating parish's local area.

Though our response was improved from last year, we remain baffled as to why more parishes simply didn't put out a bin with the words "clothing drive" on it. The 25th Chapter of Saint Matthew's Gospel states pretty clearly how the King separates based on the effort put forth to minister to the "least of my brother's" needs. Our fervent prayer is that participation continues to climb, yet at a greater rate than before. We also invite any discussion on why this may not be an option locally.

Parishes in Indiana, Michigan, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Ohio and Pennsylvania participated, with 12 parishes sending results. Thank you to those parishes with Y.M.S. of R. Branches and those without one who participated by being Christ in your local community.



St. Mary's Parish, Parma, OH

The totals are encouraging. A total of over 2,500 individual clothing pieces were collected, including over 300 coats and 700 t-shirts. Branch #29 of St. Mary's Parish in Parma, OH, lead the charge for a second year in a row. Branch #2 of Holy Mother of Sorrows Parish in Dupont, PA, finished second and

Branch #20 of Holy Mother of the Rosary Cathedral Parish in Lancaster, NY, finished third. The National Y.M.S. of R. devised a scoring system to tally items collected in order to reward the top 3 Branches with money for a sponsored activity, either for their Branch or for their Parish. Congratulations to the winners!

The Y.M.S. of R. looks forward to an event-packed year, which includes an inaugural Spiritual Retreat, hosting the National Bowling Tournament in Carbon-dale, PA, the 4th Annual National Golf Tournament

in Buffalo, NY, and sponsoring the Annual Kurs Encampment. Please continue to pray for and support the good work being done by your local Branch and by the entirety of the Y.M.S. of R.

Submitted by Rev Jason Soltysiak



Holy Mother of Sorrows Parish, Dupont, PA



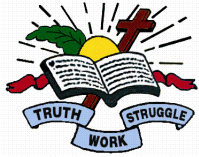
Holy Mother of the Rosary Cathedral, Lancaster, NY



Resurrection of Our Lord Parish, Temperance, MI



St. Mary's Parish, South Bend, IN



73rd Annual Y.M.S. of R./P.N.C.C. Bowling Tournament
hosted by
 United Y.M.S. of R. in Conjunction with
 Dickson City, PA, Dupont, PA, Duryea, PA, Scranton, PA Parishes



On behalf of the United Y.M.S. of R., along with the parishes from Dickson City, Dupont, Duryea and Scranton, PA, we would like to invite you to participate in the 73rd Annual Y.M.S. of R./P.N.C.C. Bowling Tournament on June 8, 9 and 10, 2018. We are excited to be hosting this year's tournament. We look forward to reuniting with old friends and making new ones. This event is one of the longest running events in our Church and we are blessed that we are able to host the event. This year, we are combining efforts with parishioners from Dickson City, Dupont, Duryea and Scranton, PA and parishioners throughout the Central Diocese.

We are making plans to utilize the scenic and beautiful Bishop Hodur Retreat and Recreation Center as our tournament headquarters. So, save the dates of June 8, 9 and 10 and come to the 73rd Annual Y.M.S. of R./P.N.C.C. Bowling Tournament, and join one of the pillars of the Church as we gather for a spiritual and fun-filled weekend. We hope to see bowlers and non-bowlers who want to come out for a summer startup vacation and anyone else who is looking for a fun and spiritual weekend.

May God Bless you as you travel to this event to share some memories and make some new memories with your family and friends at this year's event.

Respectfully,
 Nick Kazinetz
 Andrew Humphreys
 Art Golembeski, Jr.

Further information on the tournament schedule, the bowling and banquet venues and lodging accommodations, as well as entry forms and the P.N.C.C./Y.M.S. of R. Bowling Scholarship application can be found on the P.N.C.C. website at pncc.org/?event=73rd-annual-y-m-s-of-r-bowlers-tournament.

Also, keep an eye for updates on the [Y.M.S. of R. Bowling Tournament](#) FB page!





Dear Parishes, Seniorates, Organizations, Clergy, and Members of Our Holy Church,

The youth of Convo 2018 need your support. We need you to show the deep faith and strength of our Church. We need you to show what we are all about! Please consider the list of needed Convo donations, below.

Of course, no one parish, seniorate, organization or individual can do it all, but if 1,000 individuals donated only \$84 each, the entire cost would be covered. That means setting aside only \$7 over the next 12 weeks. Can you do it? We believe you are able! Don't rely on the next person. Take action with confidence that God will reward you five, ten or a hundred times over.

Pray over this list and take action as a seniorate, a parish, an organization or group of individuals. Send your donation and the item or portion of an item you intend to underwrite to:

Convo 2018
515 East Locust Street
Scranton, PA 18505

With faith and willingness please underwrite:

Overall costs:	\$63,000
Day Out:	\$13,000
Speakers:	\$7,000
Buses:	\$1,500
Audio/Video:	\$550
Liturgical needs:	\$500
Entertainment:	\$425
Hospitality:	\$400

Special individual donations:

Sponsor a Kid:	\$320
Charity:	Care kits for the NEPA Youth Shelter at \$25 each.

People have already extended themselves to fully donate:

Shirts and lanyards:	Already donated.
Entertainment:	Already donated.

Rev. James A Konicki, Pastor
Holy Name of Jesus National Catholic Church, P.N.C.C.

**EIGHTEENTH ANNUAL
MISSION & EVANGELISM
WORKSHOP**

***The UNworkshop:
You Will Find Me***



**ALL SAINTS PARISH
POLISH NATIONAL
CATHOLIC CHURCH
CARNEGIE, PA**

Friday, April 27th

Saturday April 28th

Sunday, April 29th

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE



Friday, April 27, 2018

3:00 – 5:00 pm - Registration
Holy Cross Parish

5:00 pm – Opening Session
Prime Bishop A. Mikovsky
Bishop P. Sobiechowski
Father Senior Richard Seiler, Jr.

5:15 pm – Ice Breakers
Bishop John Mack

6:00 pm – Dinner

7:00 pm – Intro to the “UNworkshop”
Bishop Stanley Bilinski
Dr. Shirley Mietlicki-Floyd

7:45 pm - Evening Prayer
with Penitential Devotions

Depart for the hotel following the
Evening Worship

Saturday, April 28, 2018

7:30 am – Breakfast, hotel
8:45 am - Morning Prayer

Session I
9:00 am – Sharing

11:00 am – Family Promise, All Saints
Parish Presentation

12:00 noon - Lunch

Session II
1:00 pm – Seeing Challenges

2:45 pm – Social Snaps and More
Hannah Bilinski

3:15 pm – Activity Break

Session III
4:00 pm – Strategies

6:00 pm - Dinner

Session IV
7:00 pm – ‘t’s a Wrap: Suggestions and
Submissions

7:45 pm - Evening prayer and
Commissioning Service
Celebrant – Evening Prayer Service:
Representative, National Mission &
Evangelism Commission

Officiant - Commissioning Service:
Prime Bishop Anthony Mikovsky

Depart for the hotel following the
Evening Worship

Sunday, April 29, 2018

7:45 am - Depart for the church

8:30 am - Morning Prayer & Mass
Morning Prayer Celebrant:
Father Senior Richard Seiler, Jr.

Mass Celebrant & Homilist:
Prime Bishop Anthony Mikovsky

Breakfast with the
All Saints Congregation

Concluding Remarks
Prime Bishop Anthony Mikovsky

Location
2019 Mission Workshop
- Western Diocese –
Invitation
Bishop Stanley Bilinski,
Ordinary, Western Diocese

Hotel Registration

Individuals are responsible
for hotel payment:
Hampton Inn, Pgh-Greentree
555 Trumbull Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15205
412 - 922 - 0100
\$109 per night plus tax
Code: SPC
Hotel Rate Expiration:
April 4, 2018

Workshop Registration

2018 Workshop Registration Fee: \$75
when postmarked on or before
April 4, 2018
\$95 when postmarked after that date

Make Checks Payable to:
All Saints Parish

Send Registration Form to:

2018 Mission Workshop
All Saint Parish
500 Fifth Street
Carnegie, PA 15106

Questions? Please Contact

The Very Rev. Richard Seiler, Jr.
(412) 276-2462

Email -
all.saints.pnc.church@verizon.net
Website - allsaintspnccpa.org

**National Mission & Evangelism
Commission Contact**

The Very Rev. Richard Seiler, Jr.
(412) 276-2462

Email -
all.saints.pnc.church@verizon.net

National Mission & Evangelism
Facebook page –
Mission and Evangelism
Polish National Catholic Church

God's Field - www.pncc.org



Important Times on Friday!

3:00 – 5:00 pm – Registration
All Saints Parish

6:00 pm – Dinner



THE UNWORKSHOP: YOU WILL FIND ME
18TH NATIONAL MISSION & EVANGELISM WORKSHOP
POLISH NATIONAL CATHOLIC CHURCH
APRIL 27 - 29, 2018
ALL SAINTS PARISH ~ CARNEGIE, PA
2018 MISSION WORKSHOP REGISTRATION FORM



Name: _____

Street Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Phone Number: _____ Cell: _____

Name of your Parish: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

email: _____

Travel Plans:

Car: _____ Van: _____ Bus: _____ Airplane: _____

Airport – Pittsburgh International Airport – Pittsburgh, PA (PIT)

Arrival Time & Date: _____

Departure Time & Date: _____

Do you need transportation to/ from the airport? Yes: _____ No: _____

Airline: _____ Flight # & Time of Arrival: _____

Cell Phone #: _____ (In case of a travel problem)

Workshop Registration Fee

☐ \$75.00 (per person) Workshop Registration Fee.

☐ \$95.00 (per person) Workshop Registration Fee (Postmarked after April 4, 2018).

Please make your check payable to: All Saints Parish

Mail your registration to: 2018 Mission and Evangelism Workshop

All Saints Parish

500 Fifth Street

Carnegie, PA 15106

XXV General Synod

General Synod Preparations

As you might imagine, the preparations that go into the holding of a General Synod of the Polish National Catholic Church are quite extensive. There are issues regarding the site to be used and all of the items that go with it; rooms for the delegates to stay in, meeting spaces and food are just some of the largest, but there are countless other items that must be attended to.

There is also much work to be done on the parish level. Parishes, as well as other Church entities, need to gather to elect delegates and parishes must work to make sure funds are available to send them to the Synod. As the time of Synod gets closer there will also be pre-synodal meetings to discuss the items that will be presented and how we will plan to set a path forward for the coming four years.

But through all of this we cannot forget that all of this Synod work, as well as all of our parish work and church work, is not just our doing, but it is the work of God through His Holy Church, which is the Body of Christ.

A paragraph from the opening portion of the P.N.C.C. Constitution says it quite well. "The most important objective of the Polish National Catholic Church, as the Catholic Church of Christ, is to maintain, enrich and develop the life of God in the soul of man. To help man know God and His holy Being so that from this knowledge and understanding may flow blessing, light, love, strength and inner satisfaction which no person or thing can give, save God – this is the most important goal of the Polish National Catholic Church." (Constitution, Tenets and Aims)

The Synod then must be the work of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and because of this I encourage our faithful, those who will attend the Holy Synod in the fall and those who cannot, to keep within their prayers, our Holy Church, the General Synod and its work. To this end we offer the following prayers from the P.N.C.C. Prayerbook.

Prayer for the Church

Almighty and eternal God, You have called us to serve You through the Polish National Catholic Church. Hear our prayer for the bishops, the priests, the deacons and the faithful of our Holy Church. May Your gifts and blessings strengthen our resolve to serve You and by our example bring others into the Mystical Body of Christ. May all that we do be for the glory of Your Name and the salvation of Your people. By our faithful witness and service may we eventually be received into your eternal kingdom. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Prayer for the Unity of the Church

O Lord Jesus Christ, before Your passion and death You prayed to Your Father for the Apostles "so that they may be one, even as We are one ... so that the world may know that You sent Me and have loved them even as You have loved Me." Reveal to the members of Your Church the peace, love and unity that comes through living in accordance with Your Word. Good Shepherd, lead us and make us one flock, for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Amendments to the Constitution and Laws of the Polish National Catholic Church

The Constitution and Laws of the Polish National Catholic Church states in Article XXIII: A proposal to amend the Constitution and Laws of this Church must be submitted in writing to the Constitution Commission at least six (6) months prior to the start of the General Synod, and shall be distributed to each Parish of this Church, together with the action taken thereon by the Commission, at least sixty (60) days prior to the start of the General Synod.

As the XV General Synod is slated to be held on October 1-3, 2018 within the Western Diocese, the six (6) month ***deadline for proposed amendments to the Constitution is April 1, 2018***. Any proposal for amendment must be received within the Office of the Prime Bishop on or before that day.

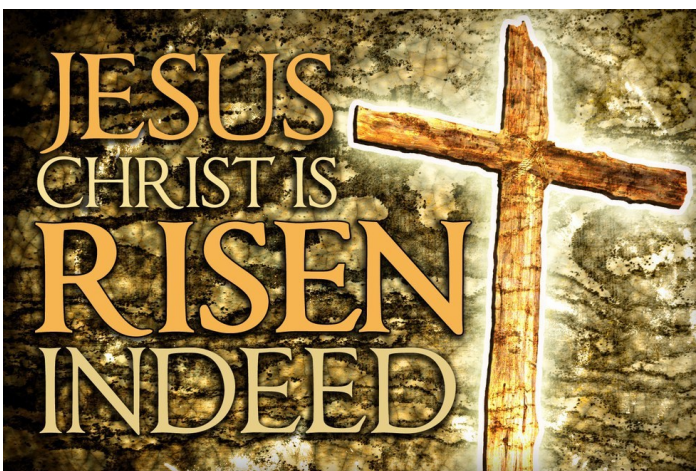
Spojnia Credit Union to Award Scholarship

Spojnia Credit Union is proud to recognize the achievements of deserving students and to support their continuing education and training. Spojnia Credit Union's annual scholarship program is an important part of its commitment to give back to the communities it serves.



Spojnia Credit Union will award a \$500.00 scholarship in June to a credit union member who is a high school senior graduating this Spring and furthering their education at the next level. The member must be in good standing with the credit union as well as the community.

Applicants will be required to submit a 500 word essay in response to the question printed on the scholarship application. Applications will be mailed to members who meet the criteria in March 2018. Applications are available online at www.spojniacreditunion.org or by calling 570-344-1513.



**Easter Greetings
from the staff of
*God's Field***

**Controller: Most Rev. Anthony A. Mikovsky
Editor: Julie Orzell**

Spojnia Credit Union

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\$1000.00 Minimum

APR - Annual Percentage Rate

Rates subject to change without prior notice

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www.spojniacreditunion.org

Become a Member of the P.N.C.C. Commission on History & Archives

Last month's article was a call for help on two immediate, pressing problems. This one is a call for a longer term commitment. It took a long time for the Commission to come into existence and develop a repository of documents and memorabilia about the Polish National Catholic Church (P.N.C.C.). We have been, over the past 30 or so years, organizing them into a research archive. This work needs to continue.

It is not too early to think about becoming a member of the P.N.C.C. Commission on History and Archives. The 25th General Synod, to be held in 2018, will soon be here. That is the time for members of P.N.C.C. Committees and Commissions to be selected. The Commission has always sought to have active members from every P.N.C.C. Diocese.

Just to refresh your memory, let me say again: The purpose of the P.N.C.C. Archives is twofold: 1. Provide a safe repository for documents and memorabilia of the P.N.C.C. and 2. Make items accessible to members of the P.N.C.C. and the general public. The first was accomplished by the provision of space in the National Church Center on the second floor and in the basement, for the Archives of the Church. The second is a work in progress.

Your help is needed now more than ever. The P.N.C.C. Archives is at a crossroads. There are many tasks that need to be done but aren't because of a lack of people power. Consider volunteering your time and effort. This article provides enough information about how to do each task which should overcome anyone's reluctance to volunteer their efforts. The present active members who work at the Archives are now in their late 70s and early 80s. A transfer of information from those who are currently doing the work now to those who will carry on would lead to a smooth transition.

Some people may not have an understanding what is involved in the work of the Commission. This article describes the work to be done. It identifies the tasks that need to be done and describes the steps necessary to complete each specific task. The tasks are identified and then explained as to what is involved in doing each one. Please read them carefully and, if you believe that you can do the work, please volunteer to do the task.

First to be described are those tasks that need to be done in Scranton at the P.N.C.C. Archives. There are nine of these. Next are the seventeen tasks that can be done at a person's home.

So even if you cannot travel to the P.N.C.C. Archives in Scranton, you can still be an active, participating member of the P.N.C.C. Commission on History and Archives. Please volunteer your time and talents so that the work of the Commission can continue.

Tasks to be Accomplished at the P.N.C.C. Archive

These include: 1. Putting documents and artifacts on the appropriate shelves; 2. Sorting the shelved documents into categories; 3. Cataloging the categorized documents and artifacts; 4. Digitizing God's Field issues; 5. Digitizing Dr. Wieczersak's file cards; 6. Digitizing the 20 issues of P.N.C.C. Studies; 7. Compiling information on P.N.C.C. clergy; 8. Compiling information on P.N.C.C. parishes; 9. Identifying historic photographs.

1. Putting documents and artifacts on the appropriate shelves

The purpose of this task is to identify on which shelf an item is to be placed. This is a two-part activity; first, one must decide what category the document or artifact fits into and then put the item on the appropriate shelf.

2. Sorting the shelved documents and artifacts into categories

The purpose of this task is to separate the shelved items into categories. For the unsorted shelves, the items are separated and then grouped into like categories. Examples are: meeting agendas, meeting minutes, reports, correspondence, publications.

3. Cataloging the categorized documents and artifacts

The purpose of this task is to enter the data into an Excel file that will serve as a catalog. The P.N.C.C. Archives uses the Excel program as a flat file database. An Excel file would be prepared with the categories listed as columns along with columns for the rack number and shelf alphabet location. This becomes what is known as a Finder's Aid, a list of the document's or artifact's name, its category and rack and shelf location.

4. Digitizing God's Field issues

The purpose of this task is to have all God's Field issues digitized and subsequently available on DVDs. Each page of every issue that has not yet been digitized is to be scanned using the scanner/copier in the National Church Center (NCC). Care must be taken in putting the pages onto the platen of the scanner/copier because of the fragility of the paper. The file name for each scan will be the issue name, number and year. The scanned information will be stored on the Archives' hard drive. The data will then be optically character read (OCR) and translated into a Portable Document Format (PDF) by the ABBYY software, which is on the Archives' computer. The ABBYY software process verifies all spelling and that the scan of the fonts has been accurately done. Some pages may need to be scanned again if the font wasn't recognized. Then the ABBYY computer program output would be saved to a CD or DVD.

This is a task that could be done by several people. It may also take several years. The ABBYY software program performs Optical Character Recognition (OCR) on the scanned files and formats them into PDF files searchable by words and phrases in both the Polish and English languages.

5. Digitizing Dr. Wiczerzak's file cards

The purpose of this task is to ensure that the information gathered by Dr. Wiczerzak in his visits to archives and libraries throughout the world is not lost and is made searchable. Each file card is to be scanned using the scanner/copier in the National Church Center (NCC). The file name will be the card number and topic names. The data is to be optically character read using the ABBYY software. The final result is expected to be the installation of the files onto a CD. Since these cards are handwritten, it is not known if they can be OCR'd. If not, the text must be typed first into a file which would then be scanned and OCR'd. Dr. Wiczerzak wrote down the quotes in the language he found them in; consequently these notes are written in both English and Polish.

6. Digitizing the 20 Issues of P.N.C.C. Studies

All of the issues have been scanned and put onto the hard drive. The next step in the process is to OCR the issues by using the ABBYY software. The final result is expected to be the installation of the files onto a CD.

7. Compiling information on P.N.C.C. clergy

Prime Bishop Robert Nemkovich began an Access file with information on all P.N.C.C. clergy. A comprehensive review of all books about the Church needs to be completed, searching for the names of clergy, their assignments and dates. This includes Synodal Proceedings, Diocesan Histories, P.N.C.C. and Parish Anniversary Books, and microfilms of Straż, Rola Boża, Trybuna, Przebudzenie, Poślanictwo and Diocesan Records. Hopefully, photographs or drawings of each clergyman will accompany the data.

8. Compiling information on P.N.C.C. Parishes

A comprehensive review of all books and publications about the Church needs to be accomplished to search for the names, locations and dioceses for parishes. This includes Synodal Proceedings, Diocesan Histories, P.N.C.C. and Parish Anniversary Books, and microfilms of Straż, Rola Boża, Trybuna, Przebudzenie, Poślanictwo and Diocesan Records.

9. Identifying Historic Photographs

The P.N.C.C. Archives has acquired hundreds of photographs of people, buildings and events from many parishes. Unfortunately, quite a few have no information about where the photograph was taken, when it was taken, why it was taken or who is in the picture. To make this photograph collection useful, that information must be found.

Tasks That Can Be Done at Home

The following list identifies 17 different tasks that can be done at home: 1. Sorting previously catalogued documents into categories; 2. Making finding aids; 3. Translating documents from Polish into English; 4. Preparing articles for God's Field; 5. Transferring data from microfilms to CDs or DVDs; 6. Identifying a useable database; 7. Listing and identifying doctoral dissertations; 8. Compiling P.N.C.C. Synod Reports; 9. Compiling Diocesan Synod Reports; 10. Compiling P.N.C.C. Synod Resolutions; 11. Compiling Diocesan Synod Resolutions; 12. Compiling Commission and Committee Reports; 13. Acquiring a photograph storage file; 14. Enhancing photographs; 15. Transferring data files onto new media storage; 16. Organizing and operating P.N.C.C. Conferences; 17. Merging donor files into categories. These are short descriptions of what needs to be done to accomplish each task.

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1. Sorting Previously Catalogued Documents into Categories

The purpose of this task is to obtain a computer file of each topic. This is done by making a computer database file and separating the data into specific topics, one for each category. Each topic will have its own sheet or page within the file. A good example is the file on Anniversary Books which has its own page for each diocese.

2. Making Finding Aids

The purpose of this task is to make the locations of documents available to researchers. This is transforming a computer database file of the holdings of a particular topic. Often this can be done with the addition of three columns: Name of the Topic, Rack Number and Shelf Letter.

3. Translating from Polish into English

The purpose of this task is to make it easier for researchers who are not fluent in Polish to examine and research the documents of the P.N.C.C. Many of the documents that the archive has are either in the Polish language, and in the Proceedings of Synods, partly in Polish and partly in English. A translation of the document into the English language will make inquiry more fulfilling for researchers who don't have an understanding of the Polish language.

4. Preparing Articles for God's Field

The purpose is twofold; first to describe a holding of the Archives and second, to generate some interest in the Archives, perhaps to have someone visit or volunteer to become a Commission member or worker.

5. Transferring Data from Microfilms to a CD or DVD.

The purpose of this task is to research and determine whether to purchase or rent a microfilm reader to transfer the data on the microfilms into electronic PDFs. The ultimate purpose is to install the data onto CDs or DVDs so that it can be more easily researched. The Archives has access to 521 reels of microfilms which are located in the P.N.C.C. Archives, the PNU Archives and the Central Diocesan Archives. This transfer has to have the agreement of the organization from which the microfilm was purchased.

6. Identifying a useable database

The purpose of this task is to identify a database which fits the needs of the P.N.C.C. Archives. The purpose of the database is to be able to enter the name of an item and have the database sort through computer files to prepare a list with a description and location of every item which the P.N.C.C. Archives has. There are a number of databases developed for use by small museums and archives. One of these is PastPerfect which is used by a small museum in Waupun, Wisconsin, operated by the local historical society, and by the New Jersey State Park Museum at Washington Crossing, New Jersey. There are other databases such as Museum Archives Software Project, CollectionSpace, TMS, EmbARK, Re:discovery, Vernon CMS, Ke-EMu. A comparison of the features of each database should then be compared with the documents and memorabilia in the P.N.C.C. Archives.

7. Listing and Identifying Doctoral Dissertations

This task has two parts. First is to make a list of all dissertations held by the P.N.C.C. Archives.

The second purpose of this task is to identify all doctoral degree dissertations that are about the P.N.C.C. or will help researchers understand the formation of the P.N.C.C. The task is the preparation of lists of doctoral dissertations for the Archives to acquire and to prepare a plan for acquisition. Bernard Welawinski prepared a listing of the dissertations with some Polish relationship which he compiled and published in a book. The book was published by East European Monographs. Other lists of dissertations can be found on various Internet sites. The purchase price of each dissertation would be listed in the final report.

8. Compiling P.N.C.C. Synod Reports

The purpose of this task is to identify every report presented to General and Special Synods. It will allow the Archives to determine which reports it needs to acquire to complete our holdings. This requires going through every General and Special Synod and preparing a list of reports. The Proceedings of the 16th, 17th, 18th, 19th, 20th, 21st, 22nd and 23rd General Synods and the 1999 Special Synod have been digitized and put onto a CD. The other Synods would have to be read to glean the Reports that were presented to each Synod. The steps in the process are: prepare a list of all reports; obtain a copy of all re-

ports; scan and digitize using ABBYY software; and transfer the digitized files onto a CD. It would be very helpful if the person who volunteers would be able to read and understand Polish.

9. Compiling Diocesan Synod Reports

The purpose of this task is to identify every report presented to Diocesan Synods. It will allow the Archives to determine which reports it needs to acquire to complete their holdings. None of the Diocesan Synod Proceedings are digitized, so they must be read to glean the reports that were presented to the Synod. Prepare a list of all reports; obtain a copy of all reports; scan and digitize using ABBYY software; and transfer the digitized files onto a CD. It would be very helpful if the person who volunteers would be able to read and understand Polish.

10. Compiling P.N.C.C. Synod Resolutions

The purpose of this task is to identify every Resolution presented to and adopted by each General and Special Synod. It will allow the Archives to determine which Resolutions it needs to acquire to complete their holdings. This requires going through every General and Special Synod and preparing a list. The Proceedings of the 16th, 17th, 18th, 19th, 20th, 21st, 22nd and 23rd General Synods and the 1999 Special Synod have been digitized and put onto a CD. The other Synods would have to be read to glean the Reports that were presented to each Synod. Prepare a list of all resolutions, Identify their passage or lack thereof. Identify the organization and/or person responsible for implementation of those passed. Identify the financial impact of implementation Prepare lists of every Resolution and identify the Synod where it was made. It would be very helpful if the person who volunteers would be able to read and understand Polish.

11. Compiling Diocesan Synod Resolutions

The purpose of this is to identify every Resolution presented to and adopted by each Diocesan Synod and will allow the Archives to determine which resolutions it needs to acquire to complete their holdings. Prepare a list of all resolutions and identify their passage or lack thereof. Identify the organization and/or person responsible for implementation of those passed. Identify the financial impact of implementation. Prepare lists of every resolution and identify the Synod where it was made. It would be very helpful if the person who volunteers would be able to read and understand Polish.

12. Compiling Commission & Committee Reports

The purpose of this is to ensure that the Archives has a copy of the agendas, minutes, publications, correspondence and financial records of all P.N.C.C. Commissions and Committees. The first step in this task would be to obtain the name and addresses of the Secretary of each Commission and Committee. The next step would be to prepare and send a letter to each of them requesting the items listed. Follow-up letters may be needed. The acquisition of such data would make the Archives more valuable to all of the members of the P.N.C.C. The operation, accomplishments and publications of these Commissions and Committees should be the bedrock of information in the P.N.C.C. Archives.

13. Acquiring a Photograph Storage File

The purpose of this is to obtain furniture to safely store the many photographs that the Archives has. Many photographs are very large size, so they will not fit into a file drawer. A multi-drawer unit is needed to provide an opportunity to separate the photographs into categories. A map case file, used in architectural and engineering offices, might be suitable for this purpose.

14. Enhancing Photographs

The purpose of this is to use a program like Photoshop to enhance photographs from newspapers and magazines. The reason for this is that the Archives would like to be able to have a picture of every clergyman and parish building. Unfortunately, sometimes the only photographs that are available are from issues of God's Field, Straż, or Parish Anniversary Books. Hopefully this computer program would be able to enhance the images.

15. Transferring data files onto new media storage

The purpose of this task is to preserve Committee and Commission Records. Many of the data files were stored on earlier file storage media such as 5 1/4 inch and 3 1/2 inch disks. This task would develop and implement 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 software. This task requires a knowledge of computer software and operating systems. These old computers are available at the P.N.C.C. Archives.

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(Become a Member of the P.N.C.C. Commission on History & Archives - Continued from Page 27.)

16. Organizing and Operating P.N.C.C. Conferences

The purpose of this is to determine how the P.N.C.C. Conferences can be restarted. P.N.C.C. Conferences have not been held for many years. This has eliminated an opportunity of bringing the history of the P.N.C.C. to the attention of university scholars and general public. What is needed is some P.N.C.C. person to take on the responsibility of organizing and operating the P.N.C.C. Conferences. Ideally, this would be a person who has some connection to academia and who could attract scholars that have some interest in researching and presenting papers relating to the history of the P.N.C.C. This task entails the search for a person to be in charge of the Conferences, venues to host the conferences, advertisement of the conferences in the academic community, review of papers to be presented, corresponding with presenters, obtaining copies for publication in P.N.C.C. Studies and preparation of the presented papers for publication in P.N.C.C. Studies.

17. Merging Donor Files into Categories

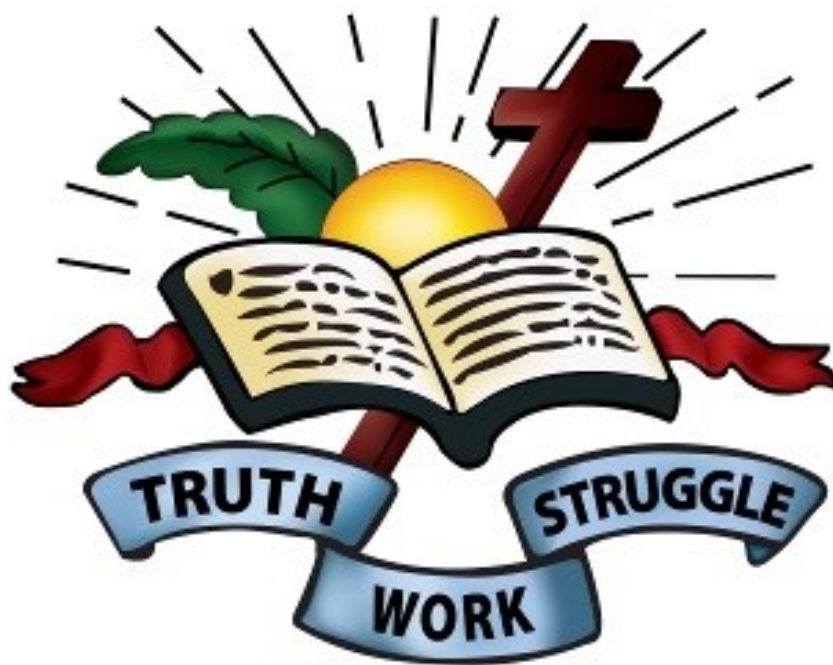
Computer database files have been prepared of the documents and memorabilia which have been donated. Many of these files had multiple pages, each with a single category. These individual donation records need to be merged so that the P.N.C.C. Archives

would have a record of documents by category and researchers would have an easier task of finding information.

So you can see that there is much to be done. Please volunteer your time and talent. If you would like to help, but not become a member, just contact the Prime Bishop's Office for information on how to do this. The Commission welcomes anyone who wants to help preserve the history of the P.N.C.C. and make it available to the public.

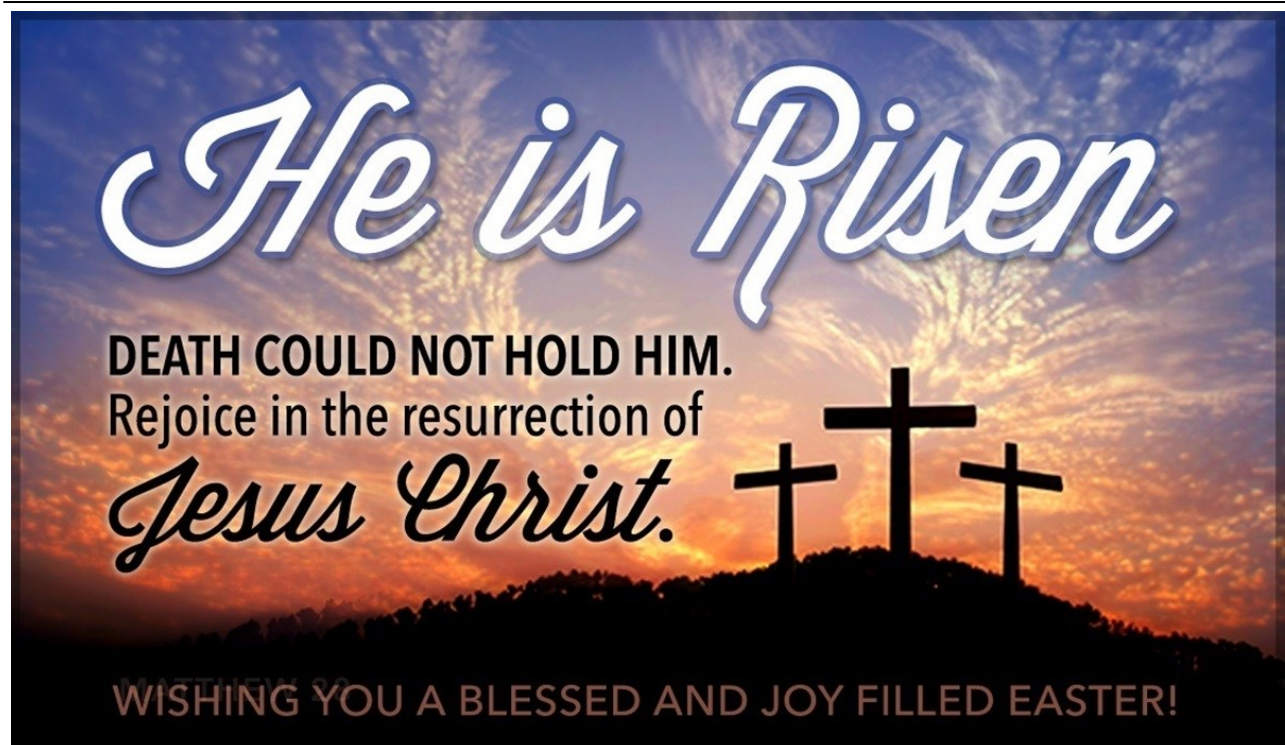
The most important qualification of a volunteer is an interest in seeing that the history of the P.N.C.C. is preserved and available to all who want to find information about the P.N.C.C. A general knowledge and familiarity with computers would be a help. A knowledge of entering data into computer files would be helpful for cataloging and preparing finders aids. Knowledge of using the Internet would be needed for some tasks. Knowing how to use a word processing program is needed for the work with P.N.C.C. Studies. Restarting the P.N.C.C. Conferences probably requires a knowledge of the academic world. A familiarity with the Polish or Lithuanian language would be an asset. You can become a member of the P.N.C.C. Commission on History and Archives or volunteer to do specific tasks.

Joseph Francis Seliga



Buffalo-Pittsburgh Diocese
**Holy Family Parish Y.M.S. of R. Branch 70
Buffalo-Pittsburgh Diocese**


In memory of Bishop Thaddeus Peplowski, the Holy Family Parish Y.M.S. of R. donated \$2,000.00 to the Clergy Pension Fund. Pictured are Frank Pociask, club president handing Fr. Bruce Sleczkowski the check in memory of Bishop Peplowski. Included are left to right: Bill Griffith, Ted Gibala, Don Newcamp, Fr. Bruce, Dave Kost, Frank Pociask, Lonnie Ruozzi, Lenny Guy and Dave Mantia



Central Diocese

Holy Mother of Sorrows Parish Conducts Annual Parish Meeting

Dupont, PA

The Annual Parish Meeting of Holy Mother of Sorrows Parish was held on Sunday, February 25, 2018 in the Frank Bednash Memorial Hall in Dupont, PA.

The meeting was called to order by Parish Committee Chair, Paul Kaspriskie, Jr. Fr. Sr. Zbigniew Dawid offered an opening prayer. Nick Kazinetz was appointed as the Temporary Chair and Susan Baldan as Recording Secretary. Reports of various organizations, Pastor, Parish Committee Chair and Financial Secretary were presented.

The 2017 parish events were summarized and discussed: Lenten Potato Pancake Dinner, Harvest Festival and Flea Market, Dupont Weekend in Waymart, Sermon, Soup and Sandwich, St Nicholas Brunch, Christmas Outreach, Winter Clothing Drive, Eve-

nings of Fellowship, Community Thanksgiving Service and many others.

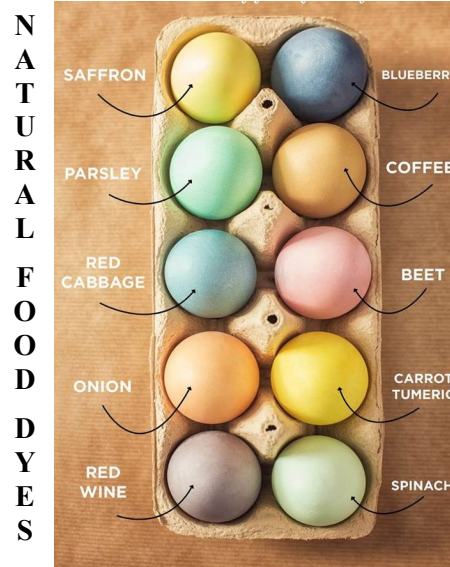
The Parish Committee election results:

Paul Kaspriskie Jr., - Parish Committee Chair; Paul Kazinetz, Jr – Vice Chair; Alexander Dubeck – Financial Secretary; Helen Jendrey -Treasurer; Susan Baldan - Recording Secretary; Board Members: Carol Bondurich, David Petrosky, Arnold Borc, Julie Slezak, Angelo Conforti, Atty., Andrew Shumlas, Carl Cwikla, Albert Micka and Rose Kazinetz.

Additionally, the delegates to the upcoming General Synod in Belleville, IL were elected:

Alexander Dubeck, David M Petrosky, Paul Kaspriskie and Albert Micka.

Submitted by Very Rev. Zbigniew Dawid, Pastor



Eastern Diocese

DEACON FORMATION PROGRAM

EASTERN DIOCESE OF THE POLISH NATIONAL CATHOLIC CHURCH

*A Time of Prayer, Reflection, Enrichment & Discernment
for men of the Eastern Diocese
interested in our Diocesan Diaconate Formation Program*

Saturday – April 7, 2018
Blessed Trinity Parish - Fall River, Massachusetts

RETREAT SCHEDULE

9:45 am Holy Mass for Vocations
Fr. Sr. Rob Nemkovich, *Celebrant*
Bishop Paul Sobiechowski, *Homilist*

10:45 am Session 1
History of the Diaconate in the Church
Fr. Henryk Wos

11:15 am – Time of Silence

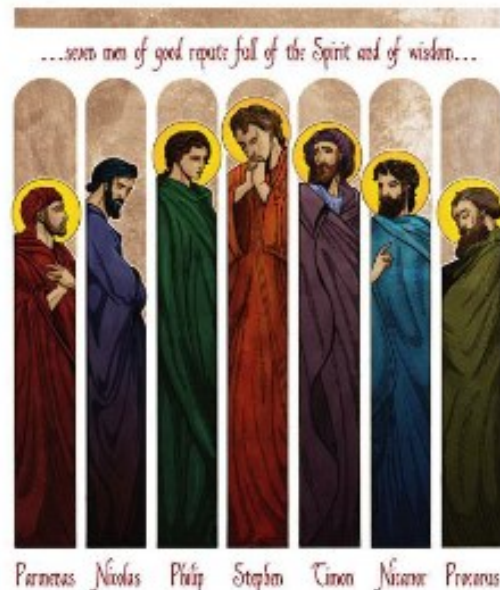
11:30 am Session 2
Reflection: The Deacon - Called to Serve
What it means to Serve - Fr. Andrzej Tenus

12:00 noon Lunch

12:45 pm A Time of meditation, reflection
and discernment - Fr. Sr. Rob Nemkovich

1:30 pm Meeting with those men who have applied to the program

*If you would like to attend, please email Fr. Sr. Rob Nemkovich
RobNem21@aol.com*





A Traditional Polish Easter Basket and Its Contents

Święconka (shvyen-son-kah) is the traditional blessing of the food to be eaten on Easter Sunday. While the tradition varies from region to region and village to village, it is a tradition dear to the heart of every Pole. Today, this blessing takes place in church on Holy Saturday. All the items are placed in a wicker basket that is sometimes lined with an ornamental cloth or traditional folk fabric. The filled basket is then covered with a linen cloth which should be white, but can have a colorful crocheted or embroidered design. The basket is decorated with sprigs of boxwood (bukszpan), the typical Polish Easter evergreen. "Polish Palms" which are created from dried flowers, can also be used for decoration.

Listed at the right are Polish Easter Foods that are most commonly placed in the Easter Basket for the traditional blessing, along with the symbolism of each item.



We can all enjoy this beautiful tradition. It is a great way to teach new generations of Polish-Americans about our common heritage.

Bacon - Boczek / Ślonina (boh-chek / swo-nee-nah)

Symbol of the overabundance of God's mercy on us.

Bread - Chleb (h'leh) Home baked bread, the staff of life.

Easter Bread - Babka (bah-kah)

A special round loaf, made of rich dough and raisins, and decorated with a cross, reminds us of Jesus, the Risen Lord, who, in the Eucharist, is the food of our earthly journey and the true bread of everlasting life.

Butter - Masło (mas-wo)

The butter should be shaped into the figure of a lamb or cross. Dairy products are included to celebrate the end of Lent and the richness of Salvation which flows from the Death and Resurrection of Jesus.

Candle - Świeca (sh-veh-tsa)

The only non-edible item in the basket, the candle symbolizes Jesus, the Life and Light of the World. The candle can be lit during the blessing.

Cheese - Ser (sair)

A symbol to remind Christians of moderation.

Colored Eggs - Pisanki (pee-san-key)

Both colored and uncolored eggs, indicate hope, new life and Resurrection. Because of their special meaning, it is fitting that the eggs to be blessed are decorated with symbols of Easter.

Ham - Szynka (shin-kah)

This popular main dish is symbolic of great joy and abundance.

Horseradish - Chrzan (h'shan)

This represents the bitter herbs prescribed in the original Passover meal as a reminder of the bitterness and harshness of the life of slavery in Egypt. It also reminds us of the bitterness of the Passion of Jesus, by which he entered glory. Horseradish is often prepared with red beets in the dish "cwikła."

Salt - Sól (sool)

Symbolizes wisdom and preservation from corruption, it is included to remind us that Jesus did not undergo corruption in the grave.

Sausage - Kielbasa (kel-bah-sah)

This is an old Slavic tradition. Its links remind us of the chains of death that were broken when Jesus rose from the dead as well as God's favor and generosity.

Happy Easter! - Wesołego Alleluja! (ves-so-veh-go ah-lay-ü-jah)

