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To Honor Our Clergy and Sacred Vocations

Most Rev. Anthony Mikovsky,
Prime Bishop

In the upcoming month of June the Polish National Catholic Church celebrates Sacred Vocations Month. In particular this should be a time of year in which all Polish National Catholics consider the importance of the clergy within the Church and also how that importance extends to our everyday life. Within the Catechism, there is unfortunately only one question that deals with the relationship of the average person to the priests. The question asks: "How should we honor our priests?" With the answer given: "We should honor our priests: 1) by giving them due respect and cooperation, 2) by praying for them, and 3) by asking God to give His Church holy and worthy priests."

While this answer may seem quite plain on its face, we can certainly give this more reflection. In looking up the verb "to honor" there are two definitions and it would do us well to consider both of them in regards to honoring our clergy. The more basic definition is to "regard with respect." Certainly this must be a part of how we consider the clergy of our Holy Church. If we give some thought to the journey that a clergyman takes within the Church we see that often it has been a journey of sacrifice. Whether they enter the priesthood or diaconate at a young or older age, the man with a vocation is placing himself under the jurisdiction and oversight of others who will guide his way and sometimes even make decisions about his life. He devotes himself to years of study, not only to learn the liturgy and theology that is necessary to preach and teach the faith and celebrate the liturgy, but he also spends time in learning how to care for others, how to bring to the children of God

the healing and comforting presence of God, whether in the sacraments or within his pastoral counseling.

The pastor of a parish, after being assigned by his bishop, will commit himself to the people of his parish and to their well-being and growth in the knowledge and love of God. He becomes a spiritual father, a friend, a confidant, a confessor, a healer who is available to each and every member of his parish whenever he is needed or called upon. He strives to anticipate the needs of his parishioners and community and then fulfill these needs as best he can, working together with the other members of the parish.

Our clergy, bishops, priests and deacons, give of themselves as they join with their parishioners in times of joy and times of sorrow. They share in the moments of joy when families gather for the birth and baptism of a new child of God or the joining of two lives in the Sacrament of Matrimony. They are there to comfort us in times of sickness when we or our loved ones are in the hospital and they are a source of strength at the worst of times like the death of a loved one. We must also remember that in their visitations to those who are sick and homebound, they are often the only source of comfort and friendship to some who are all alone and without family.

Certainly the clergy of our Holy Church have given very much of themselves to better the lives of the membership of our parishes. But in fact it often goes beyond this. If the priest or deacon has a family, then his wife and children are also a part of the sacrifice that is made for the betterment of the parish.

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Email Addresses for the P.N.C.C. Offices

The email addresses for the staff of the National Church Center and *God's Field* are:

Prime Bishop Anthony Mikovsky
pbmikovsky@pncc.org

Secretary to Prime Bishop — Julie Orzell
secretarytopb@pncc.org

P.N.C.C. Treasurer — Joan Scheuneman
treasurer@pncc.org

God's Field - Rola Boża Editor — Julie Orzell
godsfield@pncc.org

Questions or concerns? Call us at 570-346-9131 or 570-346-2125.

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CONTROLLER:

Most Rev. Anthony A. Mikovsky
1006 Pittston Avenue
Scranton, PA 18505

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Certainly there are many times when family plans are set aside or canceled because of the needs of the parish or a parishioner. Many of the wives and children of priests and deacons play active roles within the parish and its societies and give of themselves in the many activities of the parish and its role in the community. And this is done without remuneration but rather for the love of serving God and His people and the love they have for the clergy.

Now certainly we should honor our clergy for the sacrifice that they continue to make for the cause of the Church and especially for our sakes, but also there is another definition of “honor” that we might think of as well. To “honor” a thing can also mean to fulfill or keep it, such as to honor an agreement or an obligation.

We know that our clergy have accepted an obligation. They did so on the day of their ordination, vowing to obey their bishop and his successors in matters of faith, morals and discipline, but they also accept an obligation towards their parish when they are installed as pastor. In the rite of the Installation of a Pastor, the new installed pastor prays: “Good Lord and Savior, be with me in the fulfilling of my duties as Pastor. Bless me and strengthen me in my work. O Lord and my God, give me strength of body and soul, enlighten my mind with the light of Your Holy Spirit, that I may fulfill all pastoral duties for Your greater glory and for the spiritual benefit of those people entrusted to my care. Make me a worthy instrument in bringing Your people to salvation. Grant that I may faithfully administer Your Holy Sacraments, and through my life and teaching be an example worthy of Your Holy Priesthood. Be always with me, O Almighty God, one in the Blessed Trinity.”

We see in this prayer the many obligations that a pastor takes on in regards to his parish. He promises to be a good example to the flock which is entrusted to him, to be strong in body (the moral life) and soul (the spiritual life). He promises to do all for the spiritual benefit of those entrusted to his care. But we also know that agreements all have two sides. In what ways are the parishioners of a parish obligated toward their clergy? Now certainly there are the obligations that are set forth within the reports of the Clergy and Salary Benefits Commission, but is this how far it goes? Are we not in many ways to honor these men who have given of themselves, sacrificed

much and asked their families to join in this sacrifice? Certainly we must!

It was for this reason that the Supreme Council in their yearly discussion of the clergy of the Church and also in looking at the lack of Sacred Vocations within the Polish National Catholic Church decided to set aside a weekend, this year June 2-3, 2018, for each parish of the Church to honor their clergy. They decided that the first Sunday in the month of June to be celebrated in conjunction with Sacred Vocations Month within the Polish National Catholic Church will be Clergy Appreciation Weekend. Attached to this article is a number of ways in which a parish, a society or an individual might show their appreciation and love to the deacons, priests and bishops of the Church.

My dear brothers and sisters, members of our Holy Church, it is certainly my wish and prayer that every clergyman will feel that he is cherished and appreciated, not only by those in leadership, but by all of us who have received so much from their hands and through their ministry. I also pray that their families will know how much we appreciate that the wives and children share their clergyman with all of the rest of us. During this Clergy Appreciation Weekend, throughout the Sacred Vocations Month of June and even beyond, let's make sure that they know it. Let's take some time and make some sacrifices, to show our thanks for those who have sacrificed so much for all of us.

Ideas for Clergy Appreciation Weekend: (And this is just the beginning that can get us all thinking about many other ways)

1. Special church bulletin
2. Church bulletin insert/handout (use pictures)
3. Church sign (Thank you Father, Bishop, Deacon _____)
4. Newspaper advertising (We love Father ____)
5. Deliver a complete meal to the rectory.
6. Present a bouquet of flowers to his wife.
7. Prepare homemade candy for the family.
8. Deliver a fruit basket or a giant bag of specialty popcorn for the entire family to enjoy.
9. Phone in an order for delivered pizza and soft drinks for the family (and be sure to prepay the bill!).
10. Drop off cookies, cakes, and cards throughout the day.

(Continued on Page 5.)

XXV General Synod A Chance to Be Heard

As those who have been delegates to a General Synod before know, a significant amount of time is spent in listening to reports and making some decisions in regards to those reports. At the last Synod, held in Erie, PA in 2014, the Polish National Catholic Church decided to go in a bit of a different direction. At the Synod, time was spent in reflection and prayer; the delegates had an opportunity to gather together in smaller groups and some important decisions were made in a plan forward for our Holy Church. From those discussions five themes were identified and some directions forward were created. These themes are: 1) Growth and Membership, 2) Increased Spirituality, 3) Lifelong Learning, 4) Sacred Vocations and 5) Community Involvement and Presence. These themes were given in no particular order and each of them was identified as an important aspect of what we should be accomplishing as God's Holy Church. Following the Synod, the Supreme Council and Office of the Prime Bishop then began some initiatives to address some of these issues. It is also a joy to see that many of the Commissions of the Church and also the Standard Church Societies have chosen to join in the efforts begun at the Synod and to also implement programs to support and accomplish these goals.

The major effort to address these themes has been the Future Direction Subcommittee of the Supreme Council chaired by Fr. Sr. Robert Nemkovich. This Subcommittee has chosen a theme for each year since the 2014 General Synod (2018 being the Year of the Family), set a program of work for itself and the parishes of the Church each year and offered to the Church monthly emails to encourage the parish membership and the parishes themselves in this work.

We now find ourselves at the point of the next General Synod to be held in Belleville, IL this coming October and we ask, where is the Church, led by the clergy and lay delegates of the Synod, to go from here.

In preparation for this Synod, we are asking those who will serve as delegates — the clergy delegates, the parish lay delegates and all of the organizational delegates — to reflect on the work and mission of the Future Direction effort to evaluate how it has been received and accomplished within the parishes and in what ways can the parishes of the Church enter into a larger participation in the program.

We are asking the delegates to consider the following items, as well as to be prepared to discuss them and interact with others to fine tune what is to be done.

What are the strengths and weaknesses of the Future Direction Program in your parish?

What areas need to be addressed in a further way?

How successful was the implementation of the Program in your parish and area and what would increase this participation?


It is planned that an honest and open discussion of these matters will allow the Church to fine tune the five themes as well as the Future Direction program and allow the Church to continue to make progress in what we are truly called to do as the brothers and sisters of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, and that is to build up the kingdom of God around us.

As the time of the Synod is growing closer I ask the pastors as well as the parish lay delegates to discuss these matters: the five themes; the designations for the various years; the Future Direction plan for each year and the Future Direction emails; to encourage our congregations so that when we arrive at the Synod itself, we can discuss these issues in a productive way and through this discussion come to a more well-defined way to move forward.

As we find ourselves at the doorstep of the Solemnity of Pentecost where we celebrate the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the apostles in Jerusalem, let us pray that the Holy Spirit will continue to descend upon our whole Church, our clergy, lay leaders and entire membership. Let us pray that the Holy Spirit will continue to inspire us to follow the way of Jesus Christ in the world as we build up His kingdom among us.

(To Honor Our Clergy and Sacred Vocations - Continued from Page 3.)

11. Youth Appreciation Pizza Party
12. Ladies' Appreciation Tea
13. Men's Appreciation Steak Dinner
14. Family Festival Night
15. Family Prayer for the Pastor
16. Give your priest and bishop, a list of homes to which they are invited for a meal each month throughout the year.
17. Plan a surprise paid weekend vacation for the priest's family.
18. Provide a free hairdresser appointment for the pastor's wife.
19. Present a gift certificate from a catholic goods store to the pastor.
20. Arrange for a meal at a nice local restaurant for the pastor's family and have it billed to the parish.
21. Give appropriate gifts or gift certificates to the priest's children.
22. Purchase a decorator item for the rectory.
23. If the pastor has out-of-town children, arrange for them to be present to participate in the celebration.
24. Have special music for Sunday Mass.
25. Laying on of hands during prayer
26. Flood your pastor's email, mailbox, text, Facebook, etc. with love and appreciation.
27. Pick a Card.....Any Card - Get some cards, index cards maybe, and use them as vouchers/coupons, that the Pastor can redeem for different things, and each card redeemed will be fulfilled.
28. Pie or pierogi of the Month Club
29. Pastors Encouragement Jar
30. Stock the cupboards.
31. Mini Vacations: all-expense paid mini vacation for your priest to a Bed & Breakfast fairly close to the rectory for a couple of days
32. Top 10 List: based on David Letterman's Top Ten List
33. Dry Cleaning Gift Certificate for your bishops, priests and deacons
34. Patio Make-over
35. Pastor Appreciation Scrapbook
36. Offer to babysit or 'pet sit'.
37. Your pastor's favorite type of music-- buy them the CD or an iTunes gift card
38. Bring him his favorite coffee each morning.
39. Donate to the clergy pension fund in his honor.
40. Take their pets for a walk.
41. Prepare a beautifully framed photo of the congregation. Use extra wide matting and ask every parishioner to sign the mat before adding glass.
42. And importantly, pray for your pastor, really pray for him and also let him know that you do.



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From the National Youth Chaplain

Rt. Rev. Stanley Bilinski

As we prepare for Convo 2018, I'm excited that I not only get to meet once again, and for the first time, our energizing, Spirit-filled youth of Holy Church, but, also I get to meet once again and for the first time, the adults and clergy who are deeply concerned about the ministry to our youth. It is this set of folk that I pray for often, asking God's strength for you as you interact with our young people. What I want to do with this article is to affirm you and say two words that may or may not be said over you often: "Thank you."

When I'm honest, I long to hear thank you from students in my church. If you've been in youth ministry for even a short amount of time, you probably need to hear those words, too. That's why I wrote this... to simply say thank you. Thank you for who you are and for what you do.

I wish I could have you over to my house just to sit and talk youth ministry.

I imagine you might arrive a little tired, wondering whether your work with students is making any difference. Once inside my home, I'd direct you to the comfortable chair we have in our living room, and I'd open my heart to you and say, "Thank you."

I know you're not in youth ministry for the gratitude. If you were, you'd have chosen a different career by now. But still, something dwells within each of us—a need to be appreciated. I've never heard a youth worker beg, "Stop encouraging me. Seriously, please stop! I've had it up to here with your encouragement! I can't take it anymore."

You may experience times when you're not thankful to be working with students—*but there are plenty of people who are grateful that you do. Your students are, their families are, and your church is, even though they may not say it often enough.*

So sit back and let me take these next few moments to thank you, affirm you, and do it in, oh I say, ten ways:

THANK YOU FOR FOLLOWING GOD'S LEAD.

I don't know how you began working with students. Maybe you were begged to or forced. Perhaps you stepped out of a parish committee meeting to go to

the bathroom and when you returned, you found yourself appointed to the youth ministry team.

But somehow, in God's unique and mysterious ways, He called you, and you listened. God's call is a mystery. I won't pretend to understand it or try to explain it. God moved. You listened.

Now God works through you and you're pointing students toward Jesus.

Don't try to figure everything out—allow God's mysterious nature to work in you and through you. When He does, you can point to His greatness and to your inadequacy. Following God's lead and the mystery that surrounds it is one of the many supernatural elements that make youth ministry fun.

I have a friend who likes to illustrate God's mysterious nature through the common example of a youth ministry program gone bad. Undoubtedly, you've had one of those. Have you planned a youth program in which you invested a lot of time and energy? The program time rolls around, and you're thrilled to see all your planning pay off. Then the unthinkable happens. The guy teaching the music busts his guitar strings and can't lead anymore. The student who was going to give her testimony got so nervous she threw up (and now everyone is sick). The pinnacle of your creativity was showing a hilarious YouTube clip during your message, but you accidentally started at the wrong point in the video and displayed a cussing scene—right when your pastor walked into the room. Then your planned thirty-minute message lasts only six minutes because one kid in the middle of the group passed gas and all the other boys started laughing and pointing and now no one is paying attention to your thoroughly prepared message. You're totally frustrated so you just close in prayer.

After the disastrous event, a student comes up to you and says, "I want to thank you. I felt God's presence tonight."

This comment startles you so much that you blurt out, "You couldn't have felt God's presence! He wasn't here! That wasn't His presence. That was Tim's gas. No way was God here tonight."

Part of God's wonderful mystery is that sometimes He shows up more powerfully in times when you

wouldn't expect Him to. As He told the apostle Paul in 2 Corinthians 12:9, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness."

I realize you might be tempted to think, "If God's power shows up in my weakness then maybe I shouldn't plan anything—which will lead to disaster—and God's power will be revealed." Well, it's an appealing thought, but part of following God's lead is doing your part—the possible—and having faith that God will do the impossible.

When you follow God's lead, His power follows. Even when you don't know if you're doing the right thing, you follow God's lead and say, "God, use me!" That's what you do!

THANK YOU FOR STANDING UP FOR THOSE THE CHURCH OFTEN FORGETS.

In your call to be a youth worker, you often must stand up for those the church wants to forget—and often ignores. Some people in the church don't like people who are troublemakers, noisy, messy, and impulsive, or those who think differently: which describes the majority of students. (Ironically, it also kind of describes the original disciples.) You may actually get in trouble for reaching out to and caring for those types of teenagers.

You know the ones I'm referring to. They don't dress or look "right" for "church people" or the church environment. They don't use the right language. They don't respect the sacred church parking lot when they ride their skateboards too long with their pants too low and their music too loud. How are these types of students treated? Some parents will say, "Why are those kids coming to our church?" Well those kids are curious about Jesus, and they need to be part of a faith-gathering at church where they can learn more about Him.

If your youth ministry is filled only with clean-cut, smiley, always-want-to-be-at-church kids, something's wrong. Those kids are the ones who always seem happy, want more church activities to keep them busy, and will do anything and everything because they want to be with their other few church friends.

Even as I give thanks for what you've done so far, I want to challenge you to continue to find the people that the church wants to ignore. You love Jesus, and you understand his words: "Healthy people don't need a doctor—sick people do. I have come to call sinners, not those who think they're already good

enough" (Mark 2:17, NLT), and "There is rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents" (Luke 15:10, NIV).

Chances are good that those students will never thank you, so from a fellow youth worker who understands God's call on your life, I thank you for believing that Jesus can change every type of young person and for believing that your church is a place where students might gather to meet Him.

Thank you for raising your hand when the church ignores students to say, "Couldn't we consider a teenager for that?" Thank you for putting up with the laughter when you suggest the ridiculous idea that students might be able to greet at the adult service. Thank you for caring enough about teenagers to say, "Let's not forget them. A student can do this job in the church."

Adults often say, "Students are the church of the future." I realize adults make this comment assuming it's motivational and empowering...but it's wrong. Teenagers aren't the future. Teenagers are the church of today and need to be viewed and treated like the church of today. Jesus didn't say, "Follow me when you're an adult." Teenagers may scare some people in the church, but they're dying for somebody to notice and to love them.

I want to say thank you for not ignoring those the church often forgets.

THANK YOU FOR CHOOSING A MINISTRY THAT NEVER ENDS.

When you started your youth ministry journey, you probably weren't told that youth ministry never ends. There's always more to do. It's not the easiest job within the church. People regularly say, "I'm no longer in youth ministry. I can't handle the all-nighters and events and keep up with everything the students are doing. I'm out."

How many pastors do you know whose houses get toilet-papered on a regular basis? None. Youth workers do; you have to get up early on Sunday mornings to look outside.

If your house had been toilet-papered, you have to clean it up before going to church so that it didn't blow around the neighborhood and frustrate the neighbors. If you were spared, you thank the Lord for a weekend of freedom and go back to bed for another hour.

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(From the National Youth Chaplain - Continued from Page 7.)

In youth ministry, there's always more to do: another student to talk to, another campus to visit, another email to write, another curriculum to review, more toilet paper to clean up. Something else is always waiting to be done.

Many times, you perhaps dream about getting out of youth ministry and thought you would make a great volunteer. You would drive by your local McDonald's from time to time and think, "That would be a great job!" The pay would be about the same. I could work all day and then check out when I'm done. A job that could actually be finished when I leave! I can barely imagine it. A McDonald's employee doesn't get called at midnight by a parent complaining, "My Big Mac is missing. It just fell to the ground, and now some of the sesame seeds have scattered. I can't find them all, so can you come over to help?" That would never happen. When you're done working at McDonald's, you're done.

But that's not God's design when you work with students. Your job is never over.

Thank you for sticking with a ministry that never ends.

Thank you for your incredible commitment.

THANK YOU FOR TEACHING WITHOUT SEEING MUCH FRUIT OR AFFIRMATION.

The youth workers I know who teach on a regular basis typically pour their lives into their messages. They work hard, anticipating the change God's Word can make in students' lives. These teachers study and reflect and think about their words and the construction of their message. Some even practice delivering it... again, they pour their hearts into their messages.

At the conclusion of a message, a student approaches you with a smile. Anticipation runs through your mind: Oh yeah, this teenager is going to thank me for all my hard work. He was obviously impacted by it and thinks it was an awesome message! Then reality awakens the daydream when the teenager says, "Uh ... hey ... I don't have any cash. Can I borrow a buck for the Coke machine?" Few teenagers ever say, "That was great!"

If you want affirmation after you teach, you'll need to find a roomful of adults. Adults smile. They pay attention. They nod in agreement. They make you think you're the wisest human on the planet. At your

church, if you get opportunities to teach the adults you will always be blown away by their kindness:

"Thank you. That was great!"

"Wonderful message."

"Very challenging."

"I sure appreciate how you allow the Spirit to speak through you."

Honestly, you may not even know what most of those comments meant. You may need to walk through the church courtyard with a translator who clearly understood adult-spiritual vernacular. In all my years of working with teenagers, I hadn't heard a lot of affirming words pouring out after teaching them God's Word.

I know the feelings you have after you teach. You're vulnerable. You're tender. You're left wondering if you've made any difference. You question whether students are listening, let alone if they actually care about your content. Be encouraged:

You are making a difference. You're planting a seed. You're taking God's Word and translating it for the life of a teenager. Even though you may not see fruit, you keep faithfully teaching God's Word. Believe me, if you're in ministry long enough, those students will come back, and you'll see the fruitfulness of your teaching and God's Word displayed in their life. My former students would come back, sometimes as soon as their college years and say things like, "(Father Stan / Bishop Stan)! I'm leading a small group on my campus.

I wanted to say, "Really? You? You were trouble in high school. What happened? How? Really?"

God's Word will not return void. Thank you for believing that God's Word will make a difference in the life of a teenager, and thank you for continuing to teach even when you don't see fruit or receive affirmation.

THANK YOU FOR LOVING DIFFICULT PEOPLE.

There's a difference between caring for students that the church ignores and loving those who are difficult to love. You probably know the type of students I'm referring to. Every youth group in the world has at least one difficult-to-love student.

You may even have a student who better fits the impossible-to-like category, but you love him or her (Continued on bottom of Page 11.)

Triumph Over Adversity (I Pieśń Niech Zapłacze)

This book is a collection of speeches by Professor Stanley Gałązka about the life and work of Prime Bishop Francis Hodur. It was originally published in Polish in 1961 by the Polish National Union of America. The book has 77 pages, and is comprised of the following speeches: *A Colossal Veto of the Spirit; Hail, Angel of Freedom!; The First Sorrowful Anniversary; Man-Priest-Pole; Reminiscences: Third Anniversary; Bishop Francis Hodur - As An Author; Theologian, Orator, Emancipator; The Eighth Anniversary of the Bishop's Death; Great Sorrow - Great Joy; The Theological Seminary; For the Fiftieth Anniversary of Spojnia; and The Summer Campers*. It also includes an attestation by Prime Bishop Zielinski that the English translation is in accord with the Polish version and a Foreword by Bishop Anthony Rysz. The Funeral Eulogy by Prime Bishop Leon Grochowski, who was the second Prime Bishop of the P.N.C.C., is also included in this book. The translation was done by Dr. Ludwig Krzyżanowski. It was published by The Bishop Hodur Biography Commission in 1974. Quotes from the text are in italics.

There are thirteen (13) photographs in the book; they have the following titles: The Most Reverend Leon Grochowski, successor to the late Prime Bishop Hodur; Prime Bishop Hodur in death; Funeral rites at the Cathedral; The funeral cortege leaving the Cathedral on its way, the place of eternal rest; St. Stanislaus Bishop and Martyr, Scranton, Penna. First Cathedral of the Polish National Catholic Church; Grotto of Christ the Benign, Temporary resting place of Prime Bishop Hodur; Monument of Gratitude: the final resting place of the Prime Bishop; Floral tribute on the anniversary of the Prime Bishop's Death; The Polish National Catholic Church of St. Stanislaus Bishop and Martyr in Scranton, Penna. as it looked originally; "Ustronie" at Spojnia Farm where Prime Bishop Hodur wrote "The Apocalypse"; Bronze Plaque in memory of Prime Bishop Hodur; The Theological Seminary of Polish National Catholic Church instills in the souls and hearts of its students faith in God and is an example of service for the faithful of the Church; and Polish Children's Shelter, Summer Camp for the youth of the Church.

There are three poems in the speeches, two at the beginning and one at the end of the text. One has the attribution of (J.S.) One has the title 'Prayer'.

The speeches contained bits of P.N.C.C. historical background and statements to boost the spirits of the listeners. An example of such statements, contained in the first speech is *"Under these circumstances the Polish people changed the papal banner for the national flag. They began to build sanctuaries of the Lord in which they worshipped (sic) in Polish.*

Such is the story of the people who had chosen freedom; such is the epic of a free Church.

In Scranton, where men were abused where liberty and human dignity were held in contempt, a new temple arose, in which freedom reigns.

And the young pastor of this sanctuary became the symbol of the national spirit in the Church and the great inspirer of national idealism." Another is "The late organizer of the Church always went forward although his many victories he also suffered defeats. At times of defeat he used to say: "He who likes to work as hard as I do, will achieve his goal."

Five of the speeches were made on the first, second, third, eighth, and an unnumbered anniversary of Bishop Hodur's death. The speech on the first Anniversary began with the sentence *"God loans physical life to man, He does not give it to him to hold forever."* Bishop Hodur died on 7:30 am on February 16, 1953. The author quotes Bishop Hodur as often saying, *"I don't know if I shall be alive tomorrow but I shall work tomorrow, if I am alive, that I certainly know."* The speech was focused on the accomplishments of Bishop Hodur in the United States. *"He made the greatness of the Polish National Catholic Church the criterion of its objectives: moral and religious regeneration and national rebirth."* Bishop Hodur also paid attention to the secular needs of P.N.C.C. members by founding Spojnia to provide insurance and financial help to those who needed these services, by developing a home for the aged in Spojnia Farm and Warsaw Village. Bishop Hodur's belief in God and the mission of the Church is reflected in the words of the hymn of the P.N.C.C., *"Through the years unto thee O Lord"* This speech ended with *"The significance of a man's life emerges at the portals of death."*

In the second anniversary speech, Professor Gałązka said that he first met Bishop Hodur twenty years ago, soon after he arrived from Poland. He was invited to (Continued on Page 10.)

(Triumph Over Adversity - Continued from Page 9.)

Scranton where he and Bishop Hodur addressed the audience. His second visit to the cathedral was twenty-four years later, four months before Bishop Hodur died. He said that on that first visit, he and the Bishop spoke about Cracow. *"It was evident, at that moment, that this man 's entire life—everywhere in the Church, in Spojnia, at school, in his daily labors—was and at the end directed towards Poland, towards his beloved city. We know that there exists an absolute evaluation of a man's worth. It is dedication for the community for the human group combined with responsibility for the fate and future of that community."*

In the third anniversary speech, Professor Galazka said that, *"History teaches us that it is the individual who creates an idea, that in the name of that idea he sways the human masses and together with them he builds a new tomorrow."* He also said that *"Being a revisionist he was not a revolutionist, since in fact, he was a traditionalist. He built the P.N.C.C. without undermining the foundations of the Catholic Church."*

The speech Bishop Francis Hodur - As An Author opens with statements that the sermons and speeches of Bishop Hodur were comprised of simple language where each word had meaning. Bishop Hodur wrote twenty-three brochures and books and many poems. Professor Galazka said that: *"His poems belong to the canon of Polish poetry by their content, form, tonality and linguistic characteristics."* Professor Galazka talks about the Hymn of the P.N.C.C. and the book The Apocalypse, which he says *"possesses the force and gift of prophecy..."*

The speech about Bishop Hodur as Theologian, Orator and Emancipator begins with a discussion of the debate between Bishop Hodur and Monsignor Zychowicz, pastor of Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary Parish. *"The two priests who at this moment are engaged in a stubborn dispute are divided by deep-rooted differences. One of them forsook Rome and is building a Church free from papal errors and policies. He seeks new solutions for the Church for he understands the rhythm and spirit of the age. For him the Church is a spiritual endeavor and he seeks the whole truth. The other, remaining in the errors of the old Church, 'seeks a way to truth for the sake of peace.'" He covers up the wrongs and errors of Rome with a label in the belief that Roman "etiquette" is in itself almost synonymous with religion and moral-*

This speech included the recitation of the Resolution of Condolence, adopted by the Pennsylvania House of Representatives on March 9, 1953 at Harrisburg. This speech continued with reminiscences of Professor Galazka's first meeting of Bishop Hodur and hearing him speak about the "program of work for everyday, today and tomorrow He literally managed to inspire the people with the lofty aims which the Church had inscribed on its banner. This was for me an incisive lesson about Polonia which until then I had known only from lectures and books." The speech ended with a discussion of the talk about Poland and Cracow between Bishop Hodur and Professor Galazka in 1952.

In the eighth anniversary speech, Professor Galazka said that he was delighted to say that Father Tadeusz Majewski was writing a book about Bishop Franciszek Hodur. In his letter to Professor Galazka, Father Majewski asked some questions, one of which was *"What evokes the greatest admiration and respect for the late Bishop in you?"* Professor Galazka's eighth anniversary speech answers the question. He said that Bishop Hodur took on the struggle of the people in Scranton, left his parish in Nanticoke, PA and took on the role of *"a Polish shepherd and emancipator of Polish immigrants."* His answer to Father Majewski's question was *"The late Bishops sacrifice and dedication, the revolt of his noble soul."* Professor Galazka ends his speech with *"Without Bishop Franciszek Hodur there would be no Polish National Catholic Church in America."*

The unnumbered anniversary speech was given at the Home for the Aged at Waymart, PA. It was the day that the plaque in their chapel dedicated to perpetuate the memory of Bishop Francis Hodur was unveiled. The chapel and the vestibule were filled with people dressed in their Sunday best. The speech included this statement, *"We recalled that the Late Bishop's imagination, when he was outlining the plans and activities for Waymart, was mainly absorbed with two groups: the aged and the youth. It was his desire to make Spojnia at Waymart a great oasis of health and happiness for both groups."*

The speech titled The Theological Seminary was devoted to the fifty year history of the Theological Seminary of the Polish National Catholic Church in Scranton. At first, the students lived in the rectory of St. Stanislaus and often did their homework in the Cathedral. New quarters were found in Plymouth, PA, and then in the Straż building in Scranton. Even-

tually, a new building, serving the purpose of the Seminary was found in Scranton. In 1954, the Seminary was accredited by the Commonwealth of PA.

The speech on the fiftieth anniversary of Spojnia starts with a poem, author unknown. *"The school children know that the mind and heart of this endeavor was Bishop Franciszek Hodur. We would be the poorer for not having Spojnia and many other institutions: Spojnia Farm, Home for the Aged, Warsaw Village, ROLA BOŻA, STRAŻ, but above all we would be lacking a program of national and educational purpose."*

The last speech in the book is titled The Summer Campers. It is about typical day at the Youth camp. The day starts with a morning formation, prayer and the hymn by Karpinski, *"Lo this morn, we raise our voices."* Breakfast is at 7 am. Afterwards the day's schedule is read. The group then lines up in threes and marches off to the chapel for Holy Mass. After services, activities such as games, exercises, recreation, lectures and swimming are engaged. Lectures are given before lunch and dinner. *"Thirty years ago the late Bishop outlined a simple and clear program*

for the campers. He gave to the youth a joy of life amidst nature, he taught them to love America and the country of their fathers. He took care that they know the language of their parents, and taught them how to understand and love great and minor causes."

Professor Stanley Galazka met Bishop Hodur for the first time either in 1927 or 1928 or 1929, he gave these three dates in three different speeches. None of the speeches mention why the meeting took place or where it was held. Unfortunately there is no author's note, so I don't know much about him. He emigrated to the United States after World War 2. He was invited to Scranton to meet with Bishop Hodur in November 1952. I don't know why. Why was he asked to give these speeches? When, where and to whom were they given?

If anyone has information about him, please send it to me.

I urge you to read this book to expand your knowledge of the P.N.C.C., its beliefs and history.

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



(From the National Youth Chaplain - Continued from Page 8.)

anyway. I believe these students are a part of your ministry by God's design—to teach you patience (or, is it just me?).

You may try to pray these students into other youth ministries, but God keeps them in your group to humble you and teach you about unconditional love. You try to pass these students to other leaders, but no, these challenging kids want to be with you. Some hard-to-love students may even lurk around, walking up to you and standing there listening to your conversation with another student. Lurkers don't leave.

While some lurk, other students make mean comments. They're actually trying to be funny, but they're just mean: "I was looking at my youth gath-

ering pictures from last summer, and I was amazed how much fatter you are now than last year." Conversation after conversation brings a degree of wounding and pain. Everyone has a story about a student like this. You're not alone.

But you love these teenagers anyway. Maybe you feel guilty not loving them because you acted the same way when you were a teenager. But you love them mostly because you know they need love and attention.

You love them because you know that's what Jesus would do. Loving the unlovely is difficult, but I want you to hear these words, "Well done. Thank you."

Thank-yous 6-10 are for the next edition.

The Love of Our Blessed Mother

Kathryn Nemkovich, Future Direction Subcommittee of the P.N.C.C.

And the angel Gabriel said: "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus." Mary asked, "How can this be?" And Gabriel said, "For nothing will be impossible with God." Mary replied, "Here I am, the servant of the Lord; let it be done to me according to your word."

We know the story of the Nativity and the beauty of the night that Jesus was born. Each year at Christmas we all are reminded about Mary's faith and trust in God and her willingness to accept all that was told to her. One can imagine the feelings Mary had as she swaddled the beautiful little baby in her arms. Her trust in God, her faith, had delivered to her the miracle of baby Jesus...the wonder of it all.

Other than when Jesus is a child in the temple and at the wedding at Cana, the next time we witness Mary is as Jesus is on his way to Calvary. It's easy to disconnect now from the time when the angel Gabriel appeared and the wonder of Christmas and Mary holding her little baby boy.

She hears the people shouting "Crucify him" knowing that it is her son they are condemning. Imagine her suffering as Mary follows her son closely on his journey to Calvary, seeing firsthand the beatings, his falls, his pain...remaining silent as she knew this had to be.

We are witnesses to Mary's ever-present faith...her willingness to accept all that was told to her...at the time she held in her arms her new baby boy, when she held in her arms the crucified body of our savior, her son, and then when she experienced the joy of our Lord's resurrection.

Think of the struggles in your own life – consider the challenges we face in today's world – think of how hard it is at times to not question what is happening at the given moment. Our lives are a mix of happiness and sorrow, and at times our faith can certainly be tested.

Mary serves as an example to all of us. Let us stand strong in our faith, replying as Mary did..." Here I am, the servant of the Lord; let it be done to me according to your word."

As we celebrate the Year of the Family, let us also take to heart words from a song about Mary, *Gentle Woman*, and allow ourselves and our families to grow in faith and in love:

Gentle woman, quiet light
Morning star so strong and bright.
Gentle mother peaceful dove
Teach us wisdom, teach us love.

Here is **The Angelus** from our P.N.C.C. Prayer Book (The Angelus is traditionally said at 6 a.m., Noon and 6 p.m. – this is why the church bells ring at these times daily):

V. The Angel of the Lord declared unto Mary,
R. And she conceived of the Holy Spirit.
Hail Mary ...
V. Behold the handmaid of the Lord.
R. Be it done unto me according to your word.
Hail Mary ...
V. And the Word was made Flesh.
R. And dwelt among us.
Hail Mary ...
V. Pray for us, O holy Mother of God,
R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let us pray.

O Lord, we ask You, pour forth Your grace into our hearts; that we, to whom the incarnation of Christ, Your Son, was made known by the message of an angel, may by His passion and cross be brought to the glory of His Resurrection. We ask this through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Central Diocese

Cathedral UYA Spring Activities

St. Stanislaus Cathedral, Scranton, PA

Before the March 4th Annual Cathedral Parish Meeting began, the Cathedral UYA had coffee and rolls for the parishioners, along with a bake sale with an array of delectable sweets. These young people are working hard with their fund-raising to help with the expenses for Convo 2018.



The Cathedral UYA again put their bread making talents to good use. On Saturday, March 24th the UYA and their parents, along with special help from some of our dedicated (and knowledgeable in bread making) women of the parish, successfully made and braided their scrumptious bread, which many people have said that they used in their Święconka baskets!

Proceeds from the bread sale go toward this year's Convo costs!



On Palm Sunday afternoon the Cathedral UYA reenacted the Stations of the Cross. The Youth Group presented a moving portrayal of the last hours of Christ's life on earth. The Cathedral Chorale, under the direction of Peter Picerno, added to the solemnity of the stations by lifting their voices in song with various Lenten hymns.

This presentation by the Cathedral UYA and Cathedral Chorale was a perfect way to start Holy Week.



Confirmation at Holy Mother of Sorrows Parish Dupont, PA

Sacrament of Confirmation was administered by the Most Rev. Anthony Mikovsky, Prime Bishop of the Polish National Catholic Church on April 15, 2018 at Holy Mother of Sorrows Parish in Dupont, PA.

Prime Bishop was greeted by Parish Committee Chair, Paul Kaspriskie, Jr. and Parish Committee Vice-chair, Paul Kazinetz, Jr. with the traditional presentation of bread and salt at the beginning of the Mass. Music was provided by our parish organist, Jan Cwikla. Assisting Prime Bishop were Fr. Sr. Zbigniew Dawid, pastor and teacher of the confirmation class for the last two years and Fr. Robert Plichta, pastor of St John the Baptist, Frackville, PA. Patrick

Dawid was carrying a processional cross and serving at the altar.

The following received the sacrament of confirmation: Gianna Olivia **Catherine** Conforti; Jacob Robert **Francis** Honis, Ava **Edith** Musloski, Brady **Oliver** Musloski, George Darren **Michael** Remak and Victoria **Anne** Plichta (from St John the Baptist Parish, Frackville, PA). Sponsors: Janet Thomas, George P. Morgan Jr., Dorothy Kishel, Karen Musloski, David Petrosky and Ann Marie Wycheck.

A reception was held in the Parish Hall following Mass. Thanks to Carol & John Bondurich and Ruth O'Dell for their work on preparing the reception.



Submitted by Very Rev. Zbigniew Dawid

Communion at Holy Mother of Sorrows Parish Dupont, PA

First Holy Communion was held at Holy Mother of Sorrows Parish, Dupont, PA on Sunday, May 6, 2018. Fr. Zbigniew Dawid was the celebrant of this beautiful event.

The following children received the Sacrament of the Eucharist for the first time: Aubrianah Leyshon, Merrit Nash, Maci Piccolino and Hannah Yuschovitz. Stephanie Shumlas was the class teacher and Leslie Shumlas was the assistant teacher.

Submitted by Very Rev. Zbigniew Dawid



Eastern Diocese

Day of Prayer, Reflection and Discernment on the Diaconate for men of the Eastern Diocese

In the Eastern Diocese, Easter/Bright Saturday, April 7, 2018, was a day when men gathered around the table of the Lord to receive His presence in the Holy Eucharist and spent quality sacred time in prayer, reflection and discernment concerning a possible call to serve as a Deacon in the Church.

The Day began with Holy Mass of the Day celebrated by Fr. Sr. Rob Nemkovich, Eastern Diocesan Deacon Formation Program Chairman. Bishop Paul Sobiechowski gave the homily where he focused on the role of the deacon within the Church from the Holy Scriptures and St. Ignatius.

Fr. Henryk Was gave a presentation on the History of the Diaconate in the Church. After some time in silent prayer and meditation, Fr. Andrzej Tenus offered a reflection: The Deacon – Called to Serve to those gathered.

After lunch there was a time of meditation, discernment and reflection from Holy Scripture, the Church Fathers and theologians of the Church led by Fr. Sr. Rob Nemkovich. The formal portion of the program concluded with the Litany of the Saints and an Apostolic blessing from Bishop Paul Sobiechowski.

The Deacon Formation Program Board then conducted candidate interviews. We are pleased to announce that Robert Bradbury of Blessed Trinity Parish in Fall River, MA was accepted into the program. Bob joins Cleric Justin Daviault in our diocesan deacon program of studies. May God bless them in their studies towards ordination to the diaconate of the Church. Thanks to Kathryn and Joanne for their warm and tremendous hospitality.

Submitted by Very Rev. Robert M. Nemkovich



Holy Mass Celebrated by Very Rev. Nemkovich



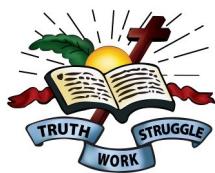
The group gathered at Blessed Trinity parish.



Fr. Henryk Was



Fr. Andrzej Tenus Presents to the Group
on The Deacon – Called to Serve



2018 Kurs June 30 - July 7, 2018



Spring is here and summer is right around the corner. That means it is time for the annual Kurs encampment, a Polish National Catholic Church tradition, sponsored by the Y.M.S. of R.

This year's theme is "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith." 2 Timothy 4:7 This is a well-known passage and is significant for believers today because it serves as a stark reminder that the Christian life is a struggle against evil — within ourselves and in the world. The Kurs theme will be incorporated within many Olympic-related activities and topics during camp week.

Rates: Polish National Catholic Church member- \$225.00 per child
Non P.N.C.C. member rate- \$275.00 per child.

The reasonable rates will provide your child with 7 days of camp in which they will participate in team building and leadership activities and build lifelong friendships. The campers will be under the supervision of the Kurs counselors who were all campers themselves and want to make your child's experience as memorable and enjoyable as possible. It is their hard work and dedication that makes the Kurs experience possible.

Registration and drop off of campers will be Saturday June 30th starting at 9:00 a.m. Pick up of campers will be Saturday July 7th at 12:00 p.m.

For further information and forms, visit the P.N.C.C. website's Kurs Encampment Event Page at: pncc.org/?event=2018-kurs-encampment-i-have-fought-the-good-fight-i-have-finished-the-race-i-have-kept-the-faith

PLEASE NOTE: This year's "Independence Day Celebration" at Spójnia Farm will be held on Saturday, June 30, 2018, beginning with a Noon Mass celebrated by Most Rev. Anthony Mikovsky, Prime Bishop. A picnic will follow Mass.

MY FAMILY TREE

Brownie
GIRL SCOUTS



**5TH ANNUAL
CAMPOREE
OF THE EASTERN DIOCESE
OF THE PNCC**

JULY 6-7-8TH 2018

**HOLY NAME OF JESUS PARISH
15 THAYER ST, SO DEERFIELD, MA**

**COST:
\$15.00 PER PARTICIPANT
DEADLINE:
JUNE 30, 2018**

CONTACT:

**MR. MICHAEL KUCHAR (401) 473-4121
FR. ADAM CZARNECKI (413) 584-0133
FR. ROBERT KOERBER (413) 665-2129**

THE CAMPOREE IS OPEN TO ALL WHO WANT PARTICIPATE:
CURRENT, PAST AND PERSPECTIVE SCOUTS (BOYS AND GIRLS)
FROM OUR PNC CHURCH AND EVEN OUTSIDE OF OUR CHURCH

Save the Date!

Ladies Adoration
of the Blessed Sacrament of the Western Diocese

Women's Retreat

"Women of Strength"



**October 5 – 7, 2018
Cardinal Stritch Retreat House
Mundelein, IL**

**Christine Grano of Mayslake Ministries
Retreat Master**

**Spiritual Counseling, Massages, Pajama Party,
Book Discussions, Personal Time, Fellowship**

Look for more information to come in June

Western Diocese

Good News from All Saints Parish

Sterling Heights, MI

It has been a busy 3 months since the arrival of our new pastor, Father Robert Fredrickson to All Saints Parish in Sterling Heights, MI.

Father Robert's first Mass was held on Sunday, February 4. Following Mass, the Y.M.S. of R. served a delicious homemade "welcome" breakfast in his honor, allowing him and his fiancé, Kathy Wojnowski, to spend some relaxing time getting to know the parishioners.



Fr. Robert at His Welcome Reception

Father Robert has brought with him some new, fresh and fun ideas. He told us he loves to cook. On St. Patrick's Day, wearing his tall, green Irish hat, he shared his Irish pride by cooking an Irish breakfast for the ladies of the altar society before they cleaned the church. The breakfast featured a wonderful corned beef hash with delicious side dishes.

On March 24, Father Robert demonstrated his cooking skills by preparing an excellent "parmesan chicken dinner" consisting of the parmesan chicken, pasta al dente with a tasty tomato-based Italian sauce, antipasto salad, rolls and variety of desserts for everyone to enjoy, along with relaxing fellowship and music. A few raffle prizes were donated and raffled off after dinner. Another "thumbs up," scrumptilicious meal prepared and served by "Chef Robert"!

The arrival of Palm Sunday and Holy Week services allowed us the final days to prepare our hearts, minds and souls for Easter Sunday. Palm Sunday was made extra special for two families when Father Robert invited Davida & Dima Dauo and Ryan Stachurski to

become altar servers, which they readily agreed to. Davida, Dima and Ryan served for the first time on Palm Sunday with mentoring by Father and acolyte Jake Bilinski. On Easter Sunday they were all joined by altar server Olivia Kotelnicki.



Davida, Dima and Ryan with Acolyte Jake and Fr. Robert

On Holy Saturday morning, our first Easter egg hunt — which was open to family, friends and the general public — was held. During Holy Week a group of parishioners and their children helped fill 1,000 multi-colored, plastic Easter eggs with a variety of Easter candy goodies. Father Robert also printed up the Jelly Bean Prayer which was inserted in baggies filled with jelly beans that each child would receive. As guests arrived, everyone gathered in the church where Father Robert explained to the children the symbolism of the egg and true meaning of Easter.

The time finally arrived to return outside where there was plenty of Easter music — like "Easter Parade" and "Here Comes Peter Cotton Tail" — playing through a sound system, while excited children scurried around the grounds looking for eggs to fill their baskets. They were especially intent on finding the "gold" and "silver" metallic eggs that held "special surprises" for them. With baskets full, everyone returned inside the hall to see what goodies were in

their eggs, while enjoying hot chocolate, coffee and homemade baked goods from our bake sale. Father Robert and Kathy had also pre-cooked dozens upon dozens of hard boiled eggs and provided colored dyes on each table in the parish hall for the children and their parents to dye and take home. A terrific time was had by all.

For “Święconka” — the blessing of the baskets — some of the children and their parents brought their baskets filled with traditional and symbolic Easter foods to be blessed. The aroma from sausages, breads and cakes arranged in beautifully decorated baskets filled the air in the church. After Holy Saturday mass, parishioners brought more baskets that were also blessed.



Fr. Robert blesses the Easter baskets.

Easter Sunday was, of course, the joyful culmination of the previous 40 days of lent. The church was filled with parishioners celebrating the spirit-filled mass through prayer and song, acknowledging that “Christ is Risen, Christ is Risen indeed, Alleluia!”

At the end of Mass, the Sunday School children, under the direction of teacher Vevean Hababa, presented a short program in which they recited “Christ is Risen...” in several languages from around the world.

After Mass, everyone gathered in the parish hall for a continental style breakfast. Father Robert gave all the children a cupcake with a candy lamb on top reminding them that ‘Jesus is the lamb of God’. Sunday school teacher, Vevean Hababa, distributed Easter baskets to all the children present. The baskets were organized and assembled by Marianne

Markiewicz with items purchased by her as well as donations from our generous parishioners. “Thank You”, Marianne and all who donated. It was a blessed and wonderful Easter Sunday.



Easter Sunday Mass



Sunday School children, Ms. Hababa and Fr. Robert

“Thank You,” Father Robert for organizing and attending to all the minute details in preparation for the Lenten and Easter activities and mass, making them so meaningful and memorable. “Thank You” to the Altar Society ladies for cleaning and decorating the church altars so beautifully. Last, but not least, “Thank You” to our Choir Director Cathy Bilinski and members of the choir for sharing your musical and vocal talents which filled our hearts with deep emotion during the Lenten services/Palm Sunday, and immense joy on Easter morning.

Submitted by Sharon Stachurski

2014 Constitutions Available

“The Constitution and Laws of the Polish National Catholic Church” booklet, as revised at the XXIV General Synod in Erie, PA, is available from the P.N.C.C. Book Department.

“The Constitution and Laws of the Polish National Catholic Church” should be in the hands of all members of the P.N.C.C. but above all by those who serve on the Parish Committees and other organizations.

Orders may be submitted via email to secretarytopb@pncc.org, by calling (570) 346-9131 or by writing to:

Book Department

P.N.C.C.

1006 Pittston Avenue

Scranton, PA 18505

The cost is \$3.00 per copy plus \$1.75 (US)/\$2.95 (Canada) postage and handling. Shipping costs for multiple copies will vary, depending on shipping method (USPS or UPS), weight and distance of shipment.

Downloadable and printable pdf versions of “The Constitution and Laws of the P.N.C.C.” can be found on the website, pncc.org, by selecting the *Beliefs and Principles* option from the *Who We Are* dropdown menu on the home page.

