

God's Field

100th Anniversary



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Issue #4

Through Your Holy Resurrection

Most Rev. Anthony Mikovsky, Prime Bishop

At long last, following the discipline and sacrifice of the Lenten season we have arrived at the glory of the resurrection of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. On this Sunday we will hear the first reactions of the apostles as they are confronted with the empty tomb and grow in faith that Jesus is risen from the dead.

In John's Gospel we read: "Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb. So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved. And said to them, 'They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid Him.'" (John 20:1-2)

The story begins with Mary Magdalene not quite understanding. She witnessed the stone rolled away. She may have even taken a quick look inside, to conclude that the body of Jesus was not there. But she did not yet understand entirely what had happened.

"Then Peter and the other disciple set out and went toward the tomb. The two were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. He bent down to look in and saw the linen wrappings lying there, but he did not go in." (John 20:3-5)

The disciples could easily have just dismissed the news given them by Mary Magdalene. This would have been especially true of the beloved disciple,

John. He had stood at the foot of the cross and watched Jesus die. But these disciples did not. They had heard the preaching of Jesus. They had witnessed His miracles. They were with Him when He was transfigured. So they set out and ran to the tomb.

"Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen wrappings lying there, and the cloth that had been on Jesus' head, not lying with the wrappings but rolled up in a place by itself. Then the other disciple, who reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed." (John 20:6-8)

What Simon Peter had witnessed begins to let us know that something is not quite right. The cloths are not totally disheveled, but rather one is rolled up very neatly. In these few short verses we go from the non-comprehension of Mary Magdalene to the declaration of the Apostle John: "He saw and believed."

But there are several things we must acknowledge in this short reading as well. The Apostles were steeped in the teaching of our Lord. As was said above, they had heard His teaching; they had witnessed His miracles, they had heard Him speak concerning His death and rising; they had been with Him during the transfiguration. And then because of all this when they were perplexed and confused, they ran to the place where Jesus should have been, at the tomb.

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**God’s Field — Rola Boża
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Typewritten articles and photographs may be submitted to:

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(Through Your Holy Resurrection - Continued from Page 1.)

Of course, He was not there. He had been raised as He said. This is the infant confession of the Apostle John who saw and believed. Scripture tells us that this was just the beginning of their understanding. “For as yet they did not understand the scripture that He must rise from the dead.” (John 20:9)

But we know that this will change too. During the weeks of Easter that follow the Sunday of the Resurrection we will experience the encounters of the disciples with the Risen Christ. In the Upper Room, on the road of Emmaus, by the Sea of Galilee. Along with these encounters with the Risen Christ we also hear of the actions of the infant Church chronicled in the Acts of the Apostles. Here we see them still gathering in the temple to share a life of prayer. We see them breaking bread in their homes sharing in the Holy Eucharist. We see them preaching the Gospel converting many others to join them in having faith in Jesus Christ Who rose from the dead.

So, my brothers and sisters, where are you in this Gospel story? Are you one who just stands along the sidelines not wanting to take a stand? Are you one who runs to the tomb, in hopes to be joined once again to Jesus? Are you one that hears the news of the Risen Christ and joins in the faith that Jesus lives? Are you one who worships with the infant Church in the breaking of bread and the prayers? I pray that we can all say with St. John that we ‘see and believe.’ Maybe we don’t see with our physical eyes, but certainly I pray that we ‘see’ much more deeply.

During the Easter Sunday procession, we sang some very powerful words when the procession stopped at the four corners of the Church. “Through Your Holy Resurrection, Christ, our Lord, Son of God, forgive us all our transgressions; for now You have risen from the dead; Life eternal has begun and death’s battle You have won through Your holy strength, O Lord.” We announce these words at the four corners of the Church reminding us that we must carry them to the four corners of the world. We must carry them wherever we are and everyplace we go.

Because Jesus lives today, our sins are surely forgiven when we call upon His strength. They were forgiven in His saving death upon the cross. But that death was not the end. We confess, “For now, Jesus, has risen from the dead.” And because of the resurrection life, “Life eternal has begun.” It is a life that

we fully participate in, especially when we gather together for the worship of Almighty God in the Holy Eucharist. And we live, no longer only for ourselves, but rather we live the life of Christ. We know that all of this is accomplished “through Christ’s Holy Strength.”

Living this Resurrection Life we say together with St. Paul: “So, I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me. Therefore I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities for the sake of Christ; for whenever I am weak, then I am strong.” (2 Corinthians 12:9b-10) and also: “And 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 loved me and gave Himself for me. (Galatians 2:20)

Yes, Christ gave Himself for me, and for each and every one of you. But that sacrifice certainly did not end in death. Rather, through Christ’s Resurrection, His death came to its full meaning. Today Jesus lives and for that reason we can “see and believe” that Christ lives in, with and through His followers. Through receiving Holy Communion and joining with Him in the Holy Eucharist, we are continually being enlivened. All of this was accomplished in His Resurrection on that first Easter morning, and yet it is still being accomplished in each of our hearts and lives as we are being conformed to the likeness of Christ.

My brothers and sisters, as we continue along in this Easter season, as we stand with the disciples and witness the resurrected Christ in Scripture and among us, as we continue to ‘see and believe’ in our own journey of faith, let us continue to announce within our lives: “Christ is risen! He is risen, indeed! Alleluia!

To my brother bishops, to the priests and deacons, to all Polish National Catholics I extend my blessing for an Easter season that is an alleluia from the first day to its last and many days beyond. Let us continue to live and share our joy that Christ lives today. Alleluia.



P.N.C.C. Future Direction April 2023

Strength from the Holy Eucharist and the whole Sacramental life of the Church

Introduction

As we continue with our reflections for the Future Direction program of the Polish National Catholic Church, this month we reflect on one of the things that we, as the delegates to the XXVI General Synod, and hopefully all of us as Polish National Catholics, resolve to do in the future. Although much important work was accomplished when we gathered for Holy Synod, we also set forth a path for the days, weeks and months to come in our journey of Christian faith. This was not only a path for our entire Church, but also a path for each of us as individual followers of Jesus Christ.

Scripture

John 6:56-58 – Jesus said: “Who ever eats My flesh and drinks My blood remains in Me and I in him. Just as the living Father sent Me and I have life because of the Father, so also the one who feeds on Me will have life because of Me. This is the bread that came down from heaven. Unlike your ancestors who ate and still died, whoever eats this bread will live forever.”

Reflection

The most vital and important thing that we do as Polish National Catholic Christians, is to participate in and receive the Holy Eucharist. We often times don't really consider this though as we are many times caught up in the minutia of the world which surrounds us. There are certainly many important things that need to be done: in our individual lives as we care for our ourselves, our homes and our families, and also in our Church life as we upkeep our parishes as places of worship, gathering and expressions of love. But none of it is more important than our participation in the Holy Eucharist.

The Catechism of the Polish National Catholic Church mentions this in question #366) What is the place of Mass in the Polish National Catholic Church? With the answer given: In the Polish National Catholic Church, Mass is the central point of worship and life, in perfect continuity with the teachings of the Apostles and practice of the primitive church. The Sacrifice of Christ upon the Cross is the supreme act of love.

It is especially important for us to focus on this in this time after the Resurrection of our Lord, the Easter season. During Holy Mass throughout the Easter season, the first reading is taken from the Acts of the Apostles. These readings describe how the infant Church began to proceed and function following the apostles encounters with the Risen Christ. It is often said during these readings that the disciples devoted themselves to “the breaking of bread and the prayers.” First and foremost these early Christians devoted themselves to the Eucharist, and did so before all else. And it must be the same for us.

This resolution from the Synod also reminds us that although the Eucharist is the summit point of our Catholic worship, its sacramental understanding also flows into all that we do as Catholic Christians. The Synod Resolution says we will “draw our strength from the Most Holy Eucharist and the whole Sacramental life of the Church.” In the most basic of ways this means that we will immerse ourselves in the Sacraments so lovingly provided to us by Jesus Christ through the Church. We will hold in high esteem our Baptism; we will receive the Sacrament of Penance often, especially in the penitential seasons, Advent and Lent; we will receive Holy Communion often, as a part of our weekly worship and attendance at Holy Mass; we will rely on the Sacrament of Anointing to aid us when we are sick; We will take seriously the Sacrament of the Word of God as an aid in our daily living.

But in some ways this attitude goes even farther. It speaks to a sacramental understanding of all that we do as Catholic Christians. We know that within the sacraments, ordinary things, such as bread, wine, water, oil etc., are used by Almighty God to reveal to us the presence of Jesus Christ and through them to have an encounter with Christ. This is something that is going on continually within our life of worship and work if we only have the eyes to see it and the desire to unite ourselves to it.

(Continued on bottom of Page 20.)



Annual Easter Greetings



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

Wesołego Alleluja!
Rt. Rev. Jarosław “Jerry” Rafalko
Leslie Rafalko

Wesołego Alleluja!
Come, rejoice, the Lord is risen!
Bishop Paul and Karen Sobiechowski

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

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

Wishing you a blessed Easter season.
Clergy Circle of the Western Diocese
Bishop Jerry Rafalko, Priests and Deacons

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

Happy and Blessed Easter! Wesołego Alleluja!
All Saints Cathedral Parish, Chicago, IL
Rt. Rev. Jarosław “Jerry” Rafalko, Pastor

Easter Blessings! Wesołego Alleluja!
Blessed Virgin Mary of Czestochowa Parish, Latham, NY
Rev. Mark Gnidzinski & Parish Committee

Christ is Risen! Wesołego Alleluja!
Church of Resurrection, Brooklyn, NY
Rev. Andrzej Koterba & Parish Committee

Holy Cross Parish, Hamtramck, MI
Very Rev. Jarosław Nowak, Pastor
He is Risen! Love is alive!

Holy Family Parish
1921 Eden Park Blvd.
McKeesport, PA 14132

Holy Mother of Sorrows Parish, Dupont, PA
Very Rev. Zbigniew Dawid, Pastor
May the resurrected Jesus fill you with love, peace and joy.

Holy Trinity Cathedral, Manchester, NH
Bishop Paul Sobiechowski, Pastor
Christ is risen! Alleluia!

A blessed Easter to all! “Wesołego Alleluja!”
Very Rev. Joseph Krusienski and the Parishioners of
Holy Trinity P.N.C.C., Plantsville, CT

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

Our Saviour’s Parish, Woonsocket, RI
Rev. Henryk Wos, Pastor
Wesołego Alleluja!

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

Christ is risen! He is risen, indeed!
Cathedral Parish of St. Stanislaus, Bishop & Martyr
Scranton, PA

Alleluia, Christ is Risen!
The Board, Management and Staff of
Polish National Union of America

Polish National Union of America
District 1
May you have a blessed Easter!

PNU District 10
He is risen!
Wishing all a joyous Easter season.

Wesołego Alleluja! Christ is Risen!
Easter Greetings from the staff of
God’s Field.
Controller: Most Rev. Anthony A. Mikovsky
Editor: Julie Orzell





NATIONAL UNITED CHOIRS
36th General Convention/28th Music Workshop
 Hosted by Central Diocese NUC
 Wednesday, August 9 – Friday, August 11, 2023
 At Holy Mother of Sorrows Parish, Dupont, Pa

Please join us as we expand our music education, lift our voices in praise to God, and enjoy the fellowship of other Music Ministers.

Convention - Wednesday, August 9

3:00 pm Registration Opens
 5:00 pm Opening Mass / 6:00 pm Dinner
 Convention 6:45 pm

Workshop – Thursday, August 10

8:30 am Registration Opens
 Sessions and Rehearsals including Morning Prayer
 Lunch
 Sessions and Rehearsals
 Dinner
 Evening Entertainment

Workshop – Friday, August 11

8:45 am Sessions and Rehearsals including Morning Prayer
 Meals
 7:00 pm – Concert

REGISTRATION DEADLINE – JULY 8, 2023

Registration Fee: \$30.00 Includes Convention and Workshop, any or all days.

Accommodations: \$82 per night plus taxes and fees (\$97 total) at SpringHill Suites, 19 Radcliffe Dr, Moosic, Pa 18507, phone 570-207-1212. Reservations are to be made under Polish National Catholic Church.

Attire: For the Concert, dark bottom and white top.

For Additional Information Contact: Al Micka, Workshop Chairman at: home 570-569-2510 or cell 570-430-7685

REGISTRATION FORM
36th GENERAL CONVENTION OF THE NATIONAL UNITED CHOIRS OF THE
POLISH NATIONAL CATHOLIC CHURCH
28th MUSIC WORKSHOP
WEDNESDAY August 9, 2023 – FRIDAY August 11, 2023
HOLY MOTHER OF SORROWS PNCC
212 Wyoming Avenue
Dupont, Pennsylvania

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY, ST, ZIP _____

HOME PHONE _____ MOBILE PHONE _____

EMAIL _____

PARISH NAME, CITY _____

Soprano _____ Alto _____ Tenor _____ Bass _____ / Instrument _____

Registration \$30, due by July 8. This amount includes lunch for Thursday and Friday and dinner on Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday.

_____ **CONVENTION AND WORKSHOP - Wednesday thru Friday**

_____ **CONVENTION ONLY - Wednesday**

_____ **WORKSHOP ONLY - Thursday and Friday**

_____ **DAILY WORKSHOP THURSDAY** _____ **DAILY WORKSHOP FRIDAY**

SPECIAL DIETARY NEEDS _____

Please make check or money order payable to: **Music Workshop**



Please mail to:
NUC Convention/Workshop
736 Beechwood Drive
Olyphant, PA 18447-1310

Hotel Accommodations are at the **SpringHill Suites, 19 Radcliffe Dr., Moosic, Pa 18507, phone 570-207-1212** at a rate of **\$82.00** per night plus taxes and fees (\$97 total). Complimentary shuttle from the airport. **Reservations must be made by JULY 8th under Polish National Catholic Church.**

Honor Your Father



We pray for all fathers, both lay and clergy, past and present, to express our gratitude, remembrance and love for all they have done for our families and for our Church.

For continued support of our Clergy Pension Fund and to acknowledge ALL FATHERS, we will publish in the June issue of God's Field — Rola Boza your name and the name of the father you wish to acknowledge or remember.

For each acknowledgement or remembrance, we are requesting a minimum donation of \$25.00, payable to the Clergy Pension Fund P.N.C.C.

We feel that this will have a two-fold affect, by acknowledging or remembering OUR FATHERS, LAY OR CLERGY, for all they have done for us and also to bolster our Clergy Pension Fund in order to show our continued support for our Clergy, our Church Fathers, who make so many sacrifices each day in service to our Church.

All donations received go toward the Clergy Pension Fund of the Polish National Catholic Church.

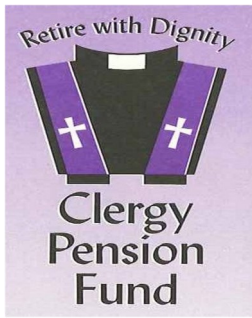
Please complete the form on the opposite page and submit it prior to June 1, 2023, along with your minimum donation of \$25.00 per name, to the

Clergy Pension Fund
1006 Pittston Avenue
Scranton, PA 18505

Please make checks payable to the "Clergy Pension Fund P.N.C.C."

Thank you for your support.

P.N.C.C. Clergy Pension Fund Committee



Honor Your Father on Father's Day

(Limit of one name per minimum \$25.00 donation)

I wish to remember (please circle) my Pastor, Father, Grandfather, or Other

I wish to remember (please circle) my Pastor, Father, Grandfather, or Other

I wish to remember (please circle) my Pastor, Father, Grandfather, or Other

I wish to remember (please circle) my Pastor, Father, Grandfather, or Other

Remembered by: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: (_____) _____

Please make checks payable to the "Clergy Pension Fund P.N.C.C." and submit the completed form with your minimum donation of \$25 per name, to the

Clergy Pension Fund Committee
1006 Pittston Avenue
Scranton, PA 18505
570-346-9131

Buffalo-Pittsburgh Diocese

Christ is Risen! Alleluia / Wesolego Alleluja!

Rt. Rev. John E. Mack

I begin this Easter letter by specifically focusing on the physical aspects of Jesus' death, burial and subsequent resurrection. In the Gospel of St. Matthew, we find Joseph of Arimathea, a follower of Jesus asking for Jesus' body after His death. He took the body, wrapped it in a clean linen, laid it in the tomb, *rolled a huge stone across the entranceway and departed*. Fast forward three days to the account of the resurrection. *"And behold, there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven, approached, rolled back the stone, and sat upon it."* Two seemingly divergent statements. One is of finality and hopelessness, one is of new hope and utter astonishment!

Just two short weeks ago, we read the Gospel account of the raising of Lazarus, the dear friend of Jesus. Mary and Martha are there as well. Upon Jesus' arrival, Martha went out to meet Jesus while Mary stayed at home. Martha is sorrowing over the loss of her brother, Lazarus, and even seems to scold Jesus a bit saying: *"Lord, if you had been here my brother would never have died."* She is hurt; she is sorrowing; she is grieving. However, her next comment speaks to her complete belief and trust in Jesus' power. She says: *"even now, God will give you whatever You ask of Him."* Jesus then comforts her with these words: *"Your brother will rise again."* These five short words contain the essence of the Easter message of hope and resurrection.

Our personal lives on this earth can be seen as a continual battle between the forces of good and the forces of evil. Yet there is a choice that must be made each and every day. It's the choice between living in a cold, dark tomb or living the abundant and faith-filled life that our Lord has promised those who believe in Him. It's a matter of seeing that heavy stone as an immovable object that is going to trap us forever, or as a temporary obstacle that can and must be overcome with God's help. The key to the decision lies in the fact that God gives each and every person who is born into this world something called free will. This all sounds so very positive, but free will comes with a price. We have the ability to choose to move towards Jesus in our daily living, doing the works of light versus the works of darkness. We also have the ability to choose to turn away from Jesus, living a life that is separated from Him; living in a tomb.

We must ask ourselves this question: "How does Christ's Resurrection effect our daily lives; our daily walk with God?" Perhaps the Gospel of the Third Sunday of Easter can give us a clue. We commonly refer to this Gospel as "The road to Emmaus." We know the story well. Two of Jesus' disciples are travelling along the road, downcast and forlorn. Their mentor, their teacher, their hero had been killed at the hands of the angry mob. All seemed to be lost. And yet this stranger drew near and began to question them about the recent events that had happened. Scripture relates how "their eyes prevented them from recognizing him." Their eyes were the very stones that covered the real presence of Jesus standing before them. This is a story not only of the past, it is our story as well. How many times do we find ourselves along the path of life with problems and disappointments? No one escapes the storms of life completely. Some people seem to carry heavier crosses than others.

This doesn't seem fair to us and we begin to question God and question our faith. We prevent our eyes from being able to recognize Him as he walks along that road with us. Why do we doubt? Why do we lack that conviction to believe that He is there with us? Is He not the one who said, "I am the way, the truth and the life?" What about that greatest nemesis of man, the eventual death of our bodies? Christ has answered that as well in His discourse with Martha at the tomb of Lazarus. Martha grieves at the loss of her brother, but clings to her belief. She says: "I know he will rise in the resurrection at the last day." Christ responds to her by saying: "I am the resurrection and the life; whoever believes in me, even if he dies, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die." Once again the miracle of Christ's victory over death leads us forth. If we can courageously hold fast to our Easter faith, our resurrected faith, nothing can overcome us!

I leave you with words from my favorite Easter anthem: "Risen Indeed." "Early in the morning, 'round about the break of day. On that Easter morning, the *stone was rolled away*. Mary saw an angel, this is what he said, Why do you seek the living out here among the dead? Don't you know that He's risen indeed!"

This Easter Season, my hope and my prayer for you is that you know most assuredly that the stone has been rolled away and Christ is "Risen indeed." May your Easter faith carry you not only throughout this Easter season, but lead you to His Eternal presence in this world and the next.

“One Voice” Performs at Holy Trinity Parish McKees Rocks, PA

Since 1991 the Choral Group, “One Voice” under the direction of David F. Pressau has spread the word of God’s love through their ministry of music. The presentation on Sunday, March 12th at Holy Trinity Parish in McKees Rocks, PA, took us on a journey through the life of Christ, His passion and resurrection, making all creation new! May the song of God’s love continue to live in our hearts and may God bless the ministry of “One Voice” as they sing a message of Easter Joy!



Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Parish Seder Meal Lilly, PA

On Sunday, March 12, Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Parish in Lilly, PA, participated in a Seder meal led by parishioner Abe Livai who did an excellent job explaining the significance of each element of the plate and the transitional ceremony. Fr. Scott Lill, pastor, then spoke a little about the connection between first Passover and that of Jesus which is made present in the Most Holy Eucharist.

Everyone then enjoyed a potluck meal featuring a delicious stewed lamb dish and many side dishes. 32 parishioners enjoyed the occasion, the fellowship and the meal.



Central Diocese

“For now Thou hast risen from the dead; life eternal has begun “ *antiphon from the processional of Easter Sunday*

Rt. Rev. Bernard Nowicki, Administrator of the Central Diocese

At the beginning of your forty-day Lenten journey, you were marked with ashes in the Sign of the Cross, that stark reminder that you are going to die. Now, at the Easter celebrations, those ashes are washed off because you're "soaked" with that same Easter water we use to join new souls to Christ in baptism and bring them into the church. Death no longer has a claim on you. I've reminded you before, and I repeat it now: it's God who has the last word – and God's word for you is the same as His word for his only-begotten Son and your Savior Jesus. It's "live!" Live! Yes, live in him!

You live! You live in him *now and forever!* After all, that's why you and I "pull out all the stops" at Easter. In Jesus' resurrection, God's life triumphs over death. At your Easter worship, your senses are ravished with beauty and sounds and fragrances as at no other time of the Church year all because he has resurrected from the dead and lives. And because he lives, you live. Life eternal has *already* begun for you! You live with him *now* and forever as you share in his resurrection through your faith.

Jesus suffered and died and resurrected precisely "that you may have life and have it more abundantly." So behold his life and resurrection around you and in you. When the gospel is preached to you and the Eucharist received, there is the resurrection and the life.

When you participate in the ministries of your parish and Church or establish new ministries within it, there is resurrection and life.

When those with different abilities and backgrounds and circumstances experience home and love from you and other parishioners, there is resurrection and life.

When you encourage young adults in your parish to discover their calling through faith, and they do, there is resurrection and life.

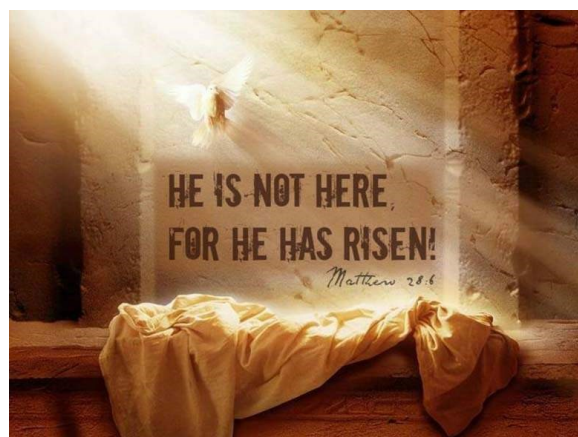
When a young person deepens his/her faith in Christ through the youth convocation or other such gatherings, there is resurrection and life.

When you and your friends journey to the men's spiritual retreat and to the women's spiritual programs of our Church, there is resurrection and life.

When you let go of your prejudice, there is resurrection and life.

In all these manifestations of resurrection as well as in others, Jesus lives. And because you are joined to him in faith with devotion and commitment, you live, too. So celebrate this divine inheritance of yours beginning on Easter Sunday and during all of the fifty joyous days of the Easter season, which is our Season of Life.

This Easter I pray that Jesus' bringing new life out of death, his transforming doubt into faith and turning sadness into joy will bring you to life, love and hope, in order that you would truly live!



Scranton Seniorate Lenten Retreat at Providence of God (Lithuanian) Parish Scranton, PA

The Scranton Seniorate of the Central Diocese held its Lenten Retreat at Providence of God Parish in Scranton, PA, on Saturday, March 18, 2023. The theme of the Retreat was: “Observing the Lenten Disciplines: Prayer, Fasting and Almsgiving.”

Rev. Carmen Bolock, Rev. Dr. Walter Placek, Very Rev. Zbigniew Dawid, Most Rev. Anthony Mikovsky (Prime Bishop, P.N.C.C.), Deacon Robert Karoscik, Rev. Janusz Lucarz and seminarian Sean Dodd (pictured in the photo below left) are the clergy who participated in the retreat.

We thank parishioners from local parishes (pictured in the photo below right) for attending and special appreciation goes out to the host parish for a delicious lunch.

Submitted by Very Rev. Zbigniew Dawid, Administrative Senior of the Scranton Seniorate



NY/NJ Seniorate Prayer Service and Agape at Holy Cross Parish Woodland Park, NJ

The annual celebration of the Last Supper of Jesus — Agape — was held at Holy Cross Parish on Sunday, March 26, 2023 at 3:30 pm. The parish was glad to welcome guests from Passaic, Wallington, Bayonne and Dunellen parishes for the NY/NJ Seniorate prayer service and reception. A hot dinner followed with a menu of baked lamb, fish, macaroni, potatoes, salad and a variety of pastries.



Eastern Diocese

Eastern Diocese Bishop's God's Field Easter Message 2023

A Reason for Hope

Why do we celebrate Easter?

I want to share an excerpt from the Gospel of Saint John that we often hear at funeral Masses. These words of hope, fitting for such a time, are from Chapter 14, verses 1 - 7. We read [the bold print is my own]: *“Do not let your hearts be troubled. **Believe in God, believe also in me.** In my Father's house there are many dwelling places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also. And you know the way to the place where I am going.”* Thomas said to him, *“Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?”* Jesus said to him, *“**I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.** If you know me, you will know my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him.”*

Saint Paul wrote: *“We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him”* (Romans 6:9).

A little further in John, chapter 14 quoted above, we hear Jesus saying, *“Those who love me will keep my word, and my Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them.”*

It takes faith on our part, but the reason we celebrate Easter is the hope it gives us to continue in this life, as we strive for an eternal life, a life beyond the grave.

Up until Jesus' death and resurrection there was no hope. Life began at birth and ended at death and there was nothing more. Nothing more for the husband and family that lose their your wife and mother to cancer. Nothing more for those who learn that a loved one is suddenly killed in an act of violence. Nothing more for a patient who learns they are diagnosed with an incurable sickness or disease. Nothing more for a person, a family, a community destroyed by an act of war or a natural disaster. Nothing more for each of us as we grow older and realize the inevitability of death.

But once Jesus rose from the dead, the grip of death was over. Paul wrote to the Corinthians: *“Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?”* *The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ”* (1 Cor. 15:55-57).

May I share a paragraph from an article entitled “Why Do We Celebrate Easter?” by Jessica Udall in Christianity.com, March 9, 2021:

“Death is a reality of life in a fallen world. All that is born will eventually die, and all good things come to an end. Or do they? Easter is celebrated as a reminder of the resurrection of Jesus Christ turned this earthly idea on its head—by his victory over the grave, he gave humanity hope that death does not have to be the end, but rather, what is mortal “can be swallowed up by life” (2 Corinthians 5:4)! Jesus left his heavenly dwelling to dwell among us (John 1:14), facing the pain of mortality and the death of his own body in order to make possible our own resurrection through the power of His Spirit at work in us! This is the beautiful truth that we celebrate at Easter time.”

Easter is Hope and for those who believe, that hope allows us to endure and even overcome the worst experiences that this secular, material world can inflict upon us. In 1775 Samuel Medley composed the following hymn that expresses the hope of Easter 248 years later:

I know that my Redeemer lives!
 What comfort this sweet sentence gives!
 He lives, he lives, who once was dead;
 he lives, my ever living Head!

He lives triumphant from the grave;
 he lives eternally to save;
 he lives all-glorious in the sky;
 he lives exalted there on high.

He lives to bless me with his love;
 he lives to plead for me above;
 he lives my hungry soul to feed;
 he lives to help in time of need.

He lives to grant me rich supply;
 he lives to guide me with his eye;
 he lives to comfort me when faint;
 he lives to hear my soul's complaint.

He lives to silence all my fears;
 he lives to wipe away my tears;
 he lives to calm my troubled heart;
 he lives all blessings to impart.

He lives, my kind, wise, heav'nly friend;
 he lives and loves me to the end;
 he lives, and while he lives, I'll sing;
 he lives, my Prophet, Priest, and King.

He lives and grants me daily breath;
 he lives, and I shall conquer death;
 he lives my mansion to prepare;
 he lives to bring me safely there.

He lives, all glory to his name!
 He lives, my Savior, still the same.
 Oh, the sweet joy this sentence gives:
 I know that my Redeemer lives!

Together with all the clergy and faithful of the Eastern Diocese I wish to everyone who reads this message an Easter of hope.

Chrystus Zmartwychwstał! Prawdziwie Zmartwychwstał !

¡El Señor ha resucitado! ¡ ¡Él ha resucitado!

The Lord is risen! He is risen indeed!

R+Rev Paul Sokolowski

Bishop Ordinary - Eastern Diocese

Polish National Catholic Church



Eastern Diocesan Lenten Retreats at Holy Name of Jesus Parish and Holy Cross Parish So. Deerfield, MA and Central Falls, RI

On Saturday, March 11, the Central Seniorate of the Eastern Diocese Lenten Retreat was hosted by Holy Name of Jesus Parish, So. Deerfield, MA. It was a wonderful day of prayer and fellowship.

We did a Reader's Theatre of The Passion of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ highlighted by our Diocesan Bishop Paul Sobiechowski's reading of the part of Jesus. It was quite moving. We also participated in the Stations of the Cross as well as a continental breakfast and delicious lunch. Thank you to all who attended.



On March 11, a Lenten Retreat was held at Holy Cross Parish, Central Falls, RI. Holy Mass of the day was followed by a light breakfast. Very Rev. Nemkovich and Kathryn Nemkovich gave presentations on God's Word in Lent and Discipleship in Lent. Everyone enjoyed a group reading of the Passion, sang and reflected on four Lenten hymns.

After a soup and sandwich luncheon the retreat was concluded by walking the Way of Cross and praying the Litany of the Passion. Thanks to Holy Cross Parish for their warm hospitality, to Fr. Henryk Wos, Subdeacon Justin and to all who attended.



Blessed Trinity Parish Youth Day of Service and Caring Fall River, MA

On Saturday, March 25th an amazing and blessed time was had with the Blessed Trinity Parish Youth Day of Service and Caring in Fall River, MA. The day began in prayer on this Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, asking her intercession. Kathryn Nemkovich read from St. Matthew chapter 25 and a moving song - With Every Act of Love - was sung.

The kids moved from station to station making sandwiches and cookies for our homeless brothers and sisters, packing 40 hearty lunches for our homeless, making heart pillows with love for patients who have undergone heart surgery at Charleton Memorial Hospital; making *Thinking of You* and Easter cards for others going through difficult times; and making peanut butter and jelly sandwiches for those in need with the FAST program in Fall River.

It was great to see the youth do so much for others—especially those in need.



Western Diocese**Easter Message from the Bishop of the Western Diocese, P.N.C.C.**

“This is the day the Lord has made, let us rejoice and be glad. Alleluia”

We see in the Gospel for Easter Sunday Peter and John running towards the empty tomb after Mary Magdalene had run to them with the news that the Lord was no longer in the grave! In the same Gospel, we read again that Mary encounters Jesus outside the tomb after Peter and John had hurried off, and she, in turn, runs to tell the disciples: *“I have seen the Lord!”* Mary was not only the first disciple to see the risen Lord, but she was a missionary-she is the Church that goes forth with a message of hope and joy!

Are we not called to be signs of hope as we rebuild our communities following the destruction caused by the Corona virus in the past years? The lessons we have learned over the past years must play a part in this renewal, especially how important, beautiful, and valuable our faith is, how vital the sacraments are to us, and how hopeful the Word of God is. Is it not our task to rebuild, renew, proclaim, go out, and be that light symbolized at Easter?

In the reading from the Acts of the Apostles for Easter Sunday, it is Peter who speaks. It encourages the little Church, so weak in many ways, to go forth in both word and deed to be of service to salvation: *“You know the message that spread throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee...how Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power went about doing good and healing...He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one ordained by God....”* We, too, must go out and gather our communities again and build them anew.

This Easter, perhaps more than ever, is an excellent reason to be hopeful in our faith and to live a true realism where we acknowledge the reality of our present situation with all its lights and shadows. An Easter Faith means to believe that God’s hand can be found everywhere and, in every event, however happy or sad, knowing, as St. Paul says: *“...that all things work together for good for those who love God.”*

Brothers and Sisters in Christ, let us rise and be on our way!

“Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia.” May God bless you with great faith, serenity, and joy this Easter.

I wish you and your loved ones, friends, family, and communities a most blessed, healthy, and graced Easter celebration.

Rt. Rev. Jarosław Rafalko

Bishop Ordinary of the Western Diocese

Prayer for Easter

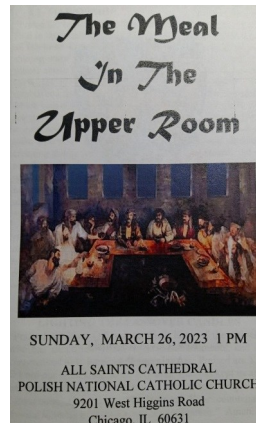
Heavenly Father, we praise You, our Everlasting Father, our Great and Awesome God. We glorify You for Your almighty power that raised Jesus Christ from His death. We thank You for Your great plan of salvation through His life, death, and resurrection, paving the way for us to have a new life with You. All praise to You for Your Great love for humanity. Thank You for giving us a Lord, a Conqueror, Victor, Redeemer, Deliverer, and a Friend in Jesus Christ our Lord.

1 Peter 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to His great mercy, He has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.



The Meal in the Upper Room

All Saints Cathedral, Chicago, IL

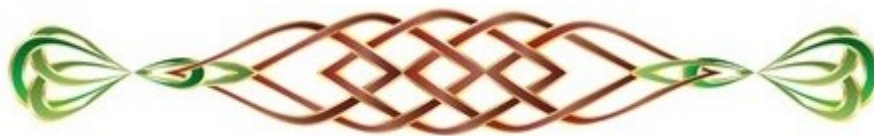


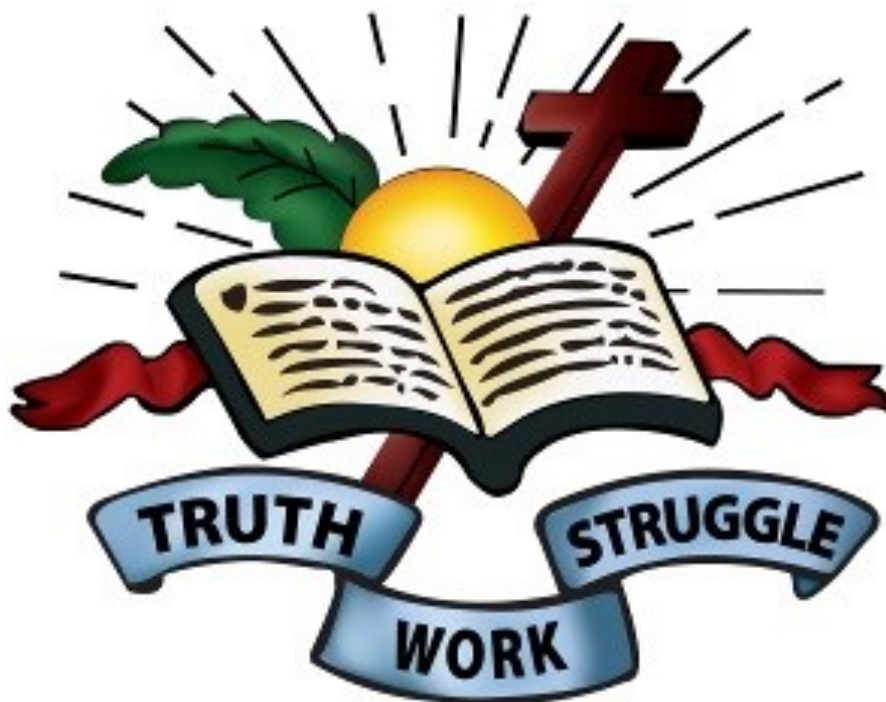
In the early afternoon on Sunday, March 26th, some All Saints Cathedral parishioners gathered together for a unique event, The Meal in the Upper Room. The beginning of this meal was at the church, with the introduction given by Father David Rowinski and the Bible Reading by Judie Szydowski.

After the Bible Reading, we all went to the nicely decorated Fellowship Hall. The Bible Readings during the event were in the English and Polish languages. The main dish during the Upper Room Meal was a Shepherd's Pie, and Margaret Rowinski prepared all the necessary parts of the meal and baked pies. Bishop Jerry and Leslie decorated the Hall, and Father David prepared liturgical booklets. Thanks to everyone for their preparation and participation in this special event.

Submitted by Rt. Rev. Jerry Rafalko







(April Future Direction Message - Continued from Page 4.)

Action Item

In preparation to receive the Holy Eucharist or at any time during the day, recite the “Devotion to the Blessed Sacrament” found within the PNCC Prayer Book. “Make our dear Lord in the Blessed Sacrament your constant thought: remember that He is your friend; tell Him all your sorrows; go often in the week, if only for a few minutes (or even only in thought) to relieve your mind in trouble, and you will find that the hardest trials will seem to pass away in a moment. Go to Him always, and you will wonder at the fullness of the comfort and support which you will receive, and at the clearness of the answers that will come in time of doubt. Place your cares into the hands of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, and they will become light, very light.”

“Jesus, my God, I adore You, present in the Sacrament of Your love.”

“Divine Redeemer, Who in Your infinite goodness has been pleased to give Your precious Body and Blood in the Holy Eucharist, I adore You with the most profound respect. I thank You for all the favors You have bestowed upon me, especially for the institution of the Most Holy Sacrament. As You are the source of every blessing, bestow Your benediction upon me, my family and friends. Bless my Church, the bishops, priests, deacons and all those for whom I pray [especially ...]. Let Your blessing flow abundantly and may it be felt in the souls of those who cannot come to Church to receive it. May the weak and tempted feel its power wherever they may be. Let all feel its influence, moving them to come to You, a hatred of sin, a greater respect of grace, a great zeal for Your honor and glory and for my sanctification and salvation. Amen.”

“My Lord and my God! Blessed and praised be the Most Holy and Divine Sacrament now and forever. Amen.”

We continue to implement the five themes the Synod determined for our Future Direction Committee:

- Growth and Membership
- Increase Spirituality
- Lifelong Learning
- Sacred Vocations
- Community Involvement and Presence