

God's Field

100th Anniversary



1923 - 2023

Official Publication of the Polish National Catholic Church

Volume 101

August 2023

Issue #8

Who Do You Say Jesus Is?

Most Rev. Anthony Mikovsky, Prime Bishop

Within the Gospel reading from the 21st Sunday in Ordinary Time we are present for a dialogue between Jesus and His disciples in the region of Caesarea Philippi. “[Jesus] asked His disciples, ‘Who do people say that the Son of Man is?’ And they said, ‘Some say John the Baptist, but others Elijah, and still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.’ He said to them, ‘But who do you say that I am?’ Simon Peter answered, ‘You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.’ And Jesus answered him, ‘Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father in heaven. And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My Church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it.’” (Matthew 16:13-18)

This Gospel reading stands as a summit to the Gospel readings from the past several weeks in this liturgical year. As we find ourselves in the middle of St. Matthew's Gospel, Jesus is being revealed to us through these Sundays. It is only in St. Matthew's Gospel that we have the story of the Three Magi (the Epiphany) as an expression of God revealing who Jesus is for us and for the world, but in fact these epiphanies continue to happen throughout this entire Gospel.

We saw this in a very explicit way in the Solemnity of the Transfiguration which was celebrated on

Sunday, August 6. Jesus was transfigured before the apostles Peter, James and John and He was seen conversing with Moses and Elijah. We have also seen this in lesser ways over the past two Sundays as well. On the 19th Sunday in Ordinary Time we encountered the miracle of Jesus walking on water. While we certainly see this as Jesus revealing His power in this miracle over nature, more importantly at the moment when Peter is also walking on water, we see him begin to sink when he allows the cares and concerns of the world to intrude. Jesus then lifts him up and declares, “You of little faith, why did you doubt?” (Matthew 14:31) We, of course, see that when Peter took his eyes off of Jesus, it was only then that he began to sink.

On the 20th Sunday in Ordinary Time we encounter the healing of the Canaanite's woman's daughter. Although this woman was not among the Jewish people, when she placed herself at the feet of Jesus and did Him homage, her faith was commended and the miracle was granted. Jesus said to her, “Great is your faith! Let it be done for you as you wish. (Matthew 15:28) Along with the Gospel readings from these Sundays, if we examine the rest of the Gospel of Matthew near these portions we also see that there are many other ways in which Jesus reveals Himself.

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**God's Field — Rola Boza
Publication Information**

The deadline for article submissions is the 1st of the month; online publication date is mid-month. Submissions received after the 1st will be included in the following month's issue.

Email articles and photos to secretarytopb@PNCC.org. If your submission was successfully delivered via email, you will receive an acknowledgement email stating that your submission was received. To ensure clarity of graphics, please send JPEG or TIFF formatted pictures with a resolution of at least 300 pixels per inch. **Please identify individuals in photographs or caption photographs.**

Typewritten articles and photographs may be submitted to:

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Jesus feeds five thousand; He cures many at the Sea of Galilee; and He feeds four thousand.

But as a culmination to these revelations, Jesus asks a question to His disciples and through them to us. “Who do you say that I am?” (Matthew 16:13) A important first point is a realization concerning where this question was asked. Jesus was in the town of Caesarea Philippi, or in other words the Caesarea in the area of Philip’s Tetrarchy. The city was named in honor of Caesar Augustus by Herod the Great and he also had built there a temple in honor of Caesar Augustus. So in this city where all things pointed to the lofty and powerful in the world, in the city where Caesar Augustus was honored as a god, Jesus asks the disciples what they really think about Him and His mission.

In response to everything that they had seen and encountered regarding Jesus, it is Peter, the spokesman for the apostles, who says “You are the Messiah (the Christ) the Son of the living God.” In answer Jesus says to Peter, “You are Peter (Petros) and upon this rock (petra) I will build my Church. In answer to the question, the Apostles take the revelation that they have continue to receive and put it into a confession, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”

Jesus goes on to say that the Church will be built on this confession. The word for ‘Church’ that is used here is ‘ekklesia,’ which means a called-out assembly. This reminds us that the Church is not just a group of individuals who gather out of their own volition. Rather, they are a group called out of the world because of their confession that Jesus is the Messiah, Jesus is the Son of the living God. And of course, we know that once this confession is made, we accept all that Jesus has done for us in His passion, His death upon the cross and His resurrection to eternal life. We accept that He has given Himself as food for the world in the Holy Eucharist.

In this we must reflect on the fact that it is not enough for us just to read the question of Jesus and the answer of the Apostles, but we must also realize that the same question is asked of us: “Who do you say that Jesus is?” I am sure that each of us can answer the question with items such as, ‘Well this is what the

Church says...” or “This is what the world thinks...” or “This is what I learned in catechism...” or “This is what my parents believe...” But none of those really get to the heart of the matter.

The issue is that each of us must answer for ourselves, “Who is Jesus for me?” And the answer to this question cannot just be a matter of our thinking or intention. This distinction was made in a writing of Cardinal John Henry Newman called “Real Assent.” He contrasted this with a mere notional assent. In notional assent, we acknowledge that a thing is true, in this case that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of the living God, but that this reality has no significant effect on our life or our living. Real assent is that belief that penetrates all that we are and all that we do. Everything in our life, every action, every thought, every relationship is permeated with the knowledge and reality that Jesus is the Messiah, the Savior, our Lord and the Son of the Living God.

If this is the case for us, then in fact we truly do not have any choice but to be called out from the rest of the world to be in the assembly of this Jesus Who is Lord and Savior and Christ. Since Jesus is to be found within His Church, in Word and in Sacrament, then I must be there as well to worship Him, to be joined with Him in prayer and to receive Him in Holy Communion.

So my brothers and sisters, I encourage all to reflect on this question for each and every one of us. As we find ourselves at Church, reflect on the reason we are gathered there while worshiping Almighty God and receiving our Lord in Holy Communion. If you have not been to Church in a while, reflect on this question as well and realize that Jesus is still calling His followers, His disciples, out from the world to reside within His Church.

Jesus said that upon the confession of Peter, He would build His Church. Let our confession be the same, that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of the living God, and that His Church, His kingdom, will continue to be built upon us, as His disciples.



P.N.C.C. Future Direction
August 2023
Selflessly Embrace the Sacrificial Work
that Christ Entrusted to our Care

Introduction

As we continue with our reflections for the Future Direction Program of the Polish National Catholic Church, this month we continue to reflect on the actual resolution portion of the accepted document of the XXVI General Synod. Last month we reflected on the teachings and statements of the Church, drawn from the Holy Scriptures, as a guide and support of our daily lives. Now we seek to embrace the work of the Church as we seek to serve others with the love of Christ in our hearts.

Scripture

Matthew 22:36-40 – Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest? [Jesus] said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”

Mark 10:43-45 – “Whoever wishes to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you must be slave of all. For the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.”

Reflection

Following all of the items which we acknowledge within the Resolution of the XXVI General Synod of the P.N.C.C., we come to the point where we state, “We hereby resolve.” After we resolved to seek strength and help for ourselves in the Holy Scriptures and the teachings of the Church, we then look to put these teachings into practice by how we love and serve others. The resolution states: we hereby resolve: to selflessly embrace the sacrificial work that Christ has entrusted to our care by fulfilling His Two Great Commandments of Love. We begin this reflection by considering how do we live out these commandments of love?

Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ gave these two commandments to a lawyer who was asking about a ranking among the 613 commandments of the Law of Moses. These two, which are found in the pages of the Old Testament, remind us that the law is not given to the people of God as some sort of contest, where the person who follows the most laws is somehow the best. It is rather to be a guideline by which we can measure our thoughts, our actions as well as all that we are. It allows us to bring all of our daily living into line with the will and love of God.

These two commandments begin with our love for Almighty God. We remind ourselves here that the word used for ‘love’ is ‘agape,’ which might be translated as ‘all self-sacrificing love.’ We are not just to have some affection for God, or to have Him as one of the many areas where our love is focused, but rather we are called to have God as the first and foremost focus of our love. The love that we have for anyone or anything else must flow from the all self-sacrificing love that we have for Almighty God.

The quote goes on to say that we must have this all self-sacrificing love for God with all our heart, all our soul and all our mind. These three points are given not just to reinforce the law, but also to show that in every area of our life and being, we must place God at the center. The ‘heart’ for the Jewish religion was the true center of a person’s physical being. Therefore all of our physical life must be directed to Almighty God. This certainly includes all of our actions. How we treat others and how we act towards them, as well as those things that we do merely for ourselves. God must be at the center of all of them. The second point is ‘all our soul’ which entails a translation of the Greek word ‘psyche.’ For the Jewish religion this term meant that which truly animates and drives us. This tells us that it is not enough just to do the right actions, but also that we need to have the right intentions behind them. We can’t just be nice to someone in a grudging way. Our thoughts and actions must be together in the active love of God and neighbor. Lastly the love must include ‘all our mind.’ This means that our rational thinking must also be brought into line with the love of God. For some of us this can be a difficult thing since we often try to live two lives, our life in the Church and our life in the rest of society. We must seek to bring these together in the service and love of God.

(Continued on bottom of Page 20.)



**United Young Men's
Society of Resurrection**
1006 Pittston Ave.
Scranton, PA
18501



Call to the 76th United Y.M.S. of R. Convention

With this official notice, The United Young Men's Society of Resurrection is calling its 76th Biennial Convention to be scheduled from Friday, October 13th through Sunday, October 15th, 2023 at Divine Providence Parish in Norwich, Connecticut in the presence of Fr. Christopher Rogalski, Pastor, Divine Providence Parish, local Priests and all the faithful of Divine Providence Parish. The United Y.M.S. of R. has a two-fold objective: first to unite the youth of the Polish National Catholic Church in God's name and in the name of the endeavor for the perfection of life.

In the words of the Y.M.S. of R.'s organizer Prime Bishop Francis Hodur, "Our society is what individual members desire it to be, based on our own will and effort, coupled with God's eternal plan in the microcosmic world in which we live and work. If we seek a particular course and prepare ourselves properly for this pilgrimage, then surely we shall attain our designated objective and our goal. We learn from history, religion, and human experience."

We desire that all Polish National Catholic Church youth never lose their link to our Polish Heritage and traditions of our past generations, but to reunite them through strong ties and shall stand ready to fulfill mutual tasks and obligations.

This effort is a lofty and noble one, worthy of the combined efforts of the young and the old- but particularly of the youth. The United Y.M.S. of R. needs your help to carry out this mission and preserve our heritage and traditions.

In order to realize this aim, it requires work and proper preparation, constant vigilance, and an energetic centralized administration. We need an organization committed to this cause; an organization that will unite the youth under one banner, inspire it with spirit and perseverance, and lead us to a brighter tomorrow.

The Young Men's Society of Resurrection is indeed such an organization. We cordially welcome the Bishops of the Polish National Catholic Church, the Very Reverend and Reverend Fathers, and our Y.M.S. of R. Brothers to our 76th Convention.

Branches needing information can contact President Nick C. Kazinetz at (570) 604-2620 or Rodryg Rogalski (860) 271-6200

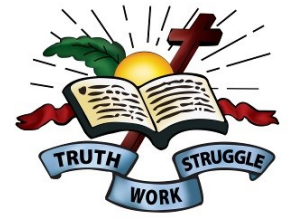
Nick C. Kazinetz
President United Young Men's Society of Resurrection

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(76th Y.M.S. of R. Convention - Continued from Page 5.)



**United Y.M.S. of R.
76th Biennial Convention | Registration Instructions**



Registrations shall be sent to Divine Providence Parish, 11 Silver St, Norwich, CT 06360.

The registration fee is \$65 per delegate (registration does not cover the cost of the hotel).
Make checks payable to *Divine Providence Parish* and mail to:

UNITED Y.M.S. of R.
76th Biennial Convention
Divine Providence Parish
11 Silver St
Norwich, CT 06360

Deadline for registration is Friday, September 24, 2023.

HOTEL INFORMATION

Comfort Suites
275 Otrobando Ave, Norwich, CT 06360
(860) 892-9292
Group Code: HZ64N3

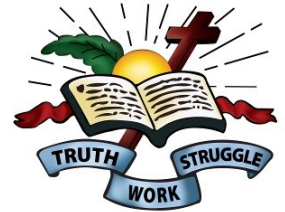
4 miles / 10 min drive from Church
2 double beds for \$390, Friday 10/13 & Sat 10/14

Amenities:

Free Full Breakfast
Premium Free WiFi
Indoor Pool
Exercise Room
Free Parking
Indoor Heated Pool
First-aid staff/24hr



UNITED Y.M.S. of R.
76th Biennial Convention Registration Form
Divine Providence Parish
11 Silver St
Norwich, CT 06360



Branch Number _____ **Parish:** _____ **State:** _____

Name of delegates attending. (no limit on delegates)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

Branch Committee

Priest: _____

President: _____

Secretary: _____

Treasurer: _____

Number of Delegates/Guests _____ x \$65 (registration fee) = _____

All Registrations need to be returned with payment by Friday, September 24, 2023

Mail this form along with your check to:

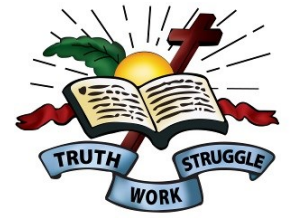
UNITED Y.M.S. of R.
76th Biennial Convention
Divine Providence Parish
11 Silver St
Norwich, CT 06360

(Continued on Page 8.)

(76th Y.M.S. of R. Convention - Continued from Page 7.)



United Y.M.S. of R. 76th Biennial Convention Schedule of Events



Friday, October 13th

Social Hour – Greeting of guests and hospitality at **Comfort Suites, 275 Otrobando Ave, Norwich, CT 06360** from 7 to 10pm

Pizza & Refreshments will be provided.

• Saturday, October 14th

Breakfast at the Hotel.

Registration 8:30 to 9am. Coffee and light refreshments.

Convention begin promptly at 9am in the Parish Hall

Lunch will be provided by Branch 27 when the Convention breaks for recess.

Convention will last till approximately 4pm.

Upon adjournment, delegates and guests are invited to Mohegan Sun Casino

7:00 - 8:00 PM, Dinner and bowling at Game On (1 Mohegan Sun Blvd, Uncasville, CT 06382)

Dinner and 1 hour of bowling (shoe rental is included).

<https://mohegansun.com/poi/dining/game-on.html>

Park at the Winter Parking Garage

Sunday October 15th

Holy Mass at Divine Providence Polish National Catholic Church at 9:00 am. Delegates must attend. Please assemble in the parish hall to process into Holy Mass as a unified body.

We will have some refreshments after Mass in the Church hall and close out the convention.

All meals are included in the registration fee for delegates.

*A separate fee for guests for Saturday evening dinner and entertainment will be paid the day of convention and is \$35.00.





**United Y.M.S. of R.
76th Biennial Convention
Agenda
Saturday, October 14, 2023**



8:30 am – 9:00 am	Registration of Delegates - Coffee Hour
9:00 am	Convention Opening - prayer - daily scripture
12:30 pm	Convention Luncheon

1. Words of Welcome given by:
 - A. **Fr. Christopher Rogalski**, Pastor, Divine Providence
 - B. Y.M.S. of R. President Branch #27
2. Greetings and Invocation: **Fr. Christopher Rogalski**
3. Singing of the Star Spangled Banner and the Hymn of the Y.M.S. of R. - "Forward O Youth"
4. Official opening of the convention: President **Nick C. Kazinetz**
5. Selection of Convention Chairman, Vice Chairman, Secretary, and Mandate Committee
6. Greetings by representatives of church committees and invited guests
7. Reading of telegrams and letters
8. Report of Mandate Committee
9. Swearing in of Delegates
10. Election of Committees: Resolution, Grievance, Press and Constitution.
11. Reading of the minutes of the previous Convention
12. Discussion of Minutes and Old Business
13. Reports of officers of the Central Committee-(President, VP, Treasurer)
14. Report of various committees:
 - A. Winter Clothing Drive
 - B. Bishop Bilinski Memorial Spiritual Retreat
 - C. Kurs
 - D. Golf Tournament
 - E. Bowling Tournament (technically separate entity, but YMS of R has hosted)
15. New Business
16. Election of Officers to the Central Committee
17. Report of the Resolution Committee
18. Selection of the site of the next convention
19. Adjournment and benediction

Upon adjournment, delegates and guests are invited to meet at 7 PM, at Game On at Mohegan Sun Casino (6 miles from the church).

Supreme Council Meeting Minutes

Manchester, NH

(Continued from Volume 101, Issue #7, July 2023 God's Field)

National United Choirs Report

The Supreme Council reviewed the prepared report of the National United Choirs Music Commission submitted by its Chairman, Dr. Neil Stahurski and the Music Scholarship Committee by its Chairwomen, Cathy A. Bilinski. A report of the National United Choirs was not submitted.

The current project for the Music Commission is the compilation and publication of a supplement to the Hymnal, which will contain musical settings for the "Service Music" of our Church. Regarding the Music Scholarship Committee, at the end of 2022, over the lifetime of the program 274 music scholarships have been awarded throughout the PNCC valued at \$346,535. Information regarding the scholarships that are offered, and application forms can be found on the scholarship website: www.nucmusicsscholarship.weebly.com. Bishop Mack, Chaplain of the National United Choirs, invited everyone to the upcoming Music Workshop and NUC Convention that will be held at Holy Mother of Sorrows Parish in Dupont, PA, August 9th, 10th, and 11th. Regina Pollock Urciuoli is the director of the workshop. The Workshop will conclude with a concert. During discussions, it was noted The United Circle Choirs of the Western Diocese is beginning to incorporate Spanish music in its program of work and that PNC hymns need to be translated into Spanish.

United Y.M.S. of R. Report

The Supreme Council reviewed the prepared report submitted by Nick Kazinetz, President of the United Y.M.S. of R that included descriptions of its activities and programs, namely, KURS, the July 4th celebration at the Spójnia Farm Campus, fraternal activities, the Men's Spiritual Retreat, the Winter Clothing Drive, Golf Tournaments, Bowling Tournaments, its convention, and activities to establish new branches of the YMS of R. The spiritual retreat is very successful with participation growing each year. The upcoming YMS of R convention will be hosted by the Eastern Diocese at Divine Providence Parish in Norwich, CT.

National United Women's Society of the Most Blessed Sacrament Report [SAMBS]

The Supreme Council reviewed the prepared report submitted by Cheryl Weinhold, President of the SAMBS that focused on its program of work. An update to the Altar Care Booklet was completed. Hard copies will be available through the Office of the Prime Bishop. This booklet will also be available online. Its upcoming convention will be hosted at Holy Trinity Parish in Plantsville, CT in May.

The Supreme Council unanimously accepted all commission and organization reports.

Dialogue Reports

The PNCC – Roman Catholic Dialogue Report

The Supreme Council reviewed the prepared report submitted by Bishop John Mack, PNCC Co-chairman of the PNCC-RCC Dialogue Commission, that included agendas of its meetings and dialogue topics. Bishop Mack reported the commission historically met two times a year. Currently it meets annually. 2024 will mark the dialogue's 40th anniversary.

The PNCC – G-3 Joint Anglican Synod Churches Dialogue Report

The Supreme Council reviewed the prepared report by Bishop Paul Sobiechowski, PNCC Co-chairman, that included descriptions of dialogue activities with the G-3 Joint Anglican Synod Churches. Summarizing his report, Bishop Sobiechowski indicated two meetings were conducted since the last Supreme Council Meeting. Apostolic Succession is the major focus of discussion for this dialogue. The next meeting of the PNCC G-3 Joint Anglican Synod Churches will be at the PNCC National Church Center in Scranton in August. The dialogue with the Anglican Church in North America (ACNA) remains suspended with nothing having been done on the part of the ACNA to resume discussions. The ACNA has yet to deal with the matter of dual integrity as regards the Sacrament of Priesthood.

The Supreme Council unanimously accepted the dialogue reports.

Report of the Ecumenical Officer of the PNCC

The Supreme Council reviewed the prepared report of Father Senior Robert M Nemkovich, Jr., Ecumenical Officer of the PNCC. Major activities include his work with the PNCC Dialogues, the Union of Scranton, biweekly PNCC Meetings of Bishops, World Council of Churches, the National Council of Churches, Christian Churches Together and Church World Service. He and the Prime Bishop serve on the National Council of Churches Governing Board. He also attends regular White House Office of Faith and Community Engagement meetings. He also attended a Union of Scranton Theological Conference in Mainz Germany this past February. During discussion, it was noted the Nordic Catholic Church centered in Norway, has outreach and missions in Germany, Sweden, Hungary, France, Spain, and England. These missions are in various stages of development. Prime Bishop thanked Father Senior Nemkovich for the many hours he spends in his capacity as Ecumenical Officer. The Supreme Council unanimously accepted the Report of the Ecumenical Officer.

The Budget & Finance Committee Report

Prime Bishop Mikovsky and Joan Scheuneman, PNCC Treasurer, presented the proposed budget. As in past years the expense side of the budget is accurate. However, income is always a challenge to predict. Prime Bishop thanked Joan Scheuneman, PNCC Treasurer, for putting the budget together.

The following dues allotment was unanimously accepted by the Supreme Council for fiscal 2023. Next synods may need to consider raising the dues specifically dedicated to the Clergy Pension Fund. More research into the current financial status of the Clergy Pension Fund needs to occur to determine the amount needed.

Recommended General Fund Dues Apportionment:

Diocese	\$ 3.00
Youth	\$ 2.00
Clergy Hospitalization	\$ 40.15
Administration	\$ 46.60
Mission	\$ 1.00
Clergy Pension	\$ 7.00
Seminary	\$.25
TOTAL	\$100.00

Regarding Clergy Aid to Parishes, the Supreme Council unanimously approved \$58,500 for fiscal year 2023 based on recommendations by the Prime Bishop and Diocesan Bishops. The Supreme Council decided a few years ago that clergy aid would be provided to a parish for no more than three years. It is meant as a short-term bridge while parishes gain new members.

The Supreme Council approved an 8.7% Cost of Living Adjustment [COLA] for PNCC Staff.

Regarding a donation to the Spójnia, Inc. Capital Fund Campaign, while the Supreme Council encourages such a campaign, it was decided to postpone a donation to it until the long-term plan is completed and the scope of the campaign is further defined.

Finally, the Supreme Council unanimously approved the recommended budget for 2023 with slight modifications.

New Business

No correspondence was directed to the Supreme Council. There were no requests for loans.

Discussion for the Good of the P.N.C.C.

Regarding the Arthur W. Zabierek Scholarship Trust that was left to the PNCC several years ago to fund scholarships, Cathy Bilinski volunteered to lead a team to define the qualifications for the scholarship and structure the program. These will be presented to the next Annual Meeting of the Supreme Council in 2024. Based on current funds in the account it is believed several \$5K scholarships could be awarded per year.

The 6% Fund is a major vehicle by which the National Church receives income from parishes. It has been in existence for over fifty plus years, yet it was noted there is confusion about what qualifies for the fund. Fa-

(Continued on Page 12.)

(Supreme Council Meeting Minutes- Continued from Page 11.)

ther Senior Charles Zawistowski volunteered to put a proposal together to replace the 6% Fund with a vehicle that is proactive rather than reactive, so that at the beginning of the year, every parish will know exactly what its obligations to the National Church will be. The proposal will be presented to the Supreme Council for discussion and ultimately presented to the next general synod.

Prime Bishop Mikovsky suggested that a voice over slide show presentation for treasurers of parishes may be a great tool for training. The presentation would explain the various funds, and how a treasurer submits those funds to the Diocese and PNCC Treasurer, as well as how clergy hospitalization insurance premiums are reimbursed. This would be helpful for new parish treasurers.

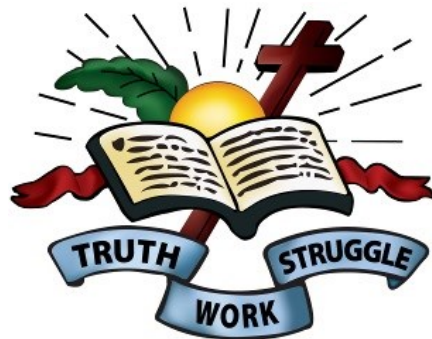
Robert Giczkowski suggested a handbook be published for clergy to explain clergy benefits because he found some priests are not aware of the benefits. This information is contained in the Report of the Clergy Salary and Benefits Commission. The Office of the Prime Bishop receives approximately fifty requests per year for information on clergy salary and benefits. It sends the Report of the Clergy Salary and Benefits Commission presented to every synod and sent to each parish annually to satisfy this request. So, this supports the challenge the Clergy Salary and Benefits Commission raised, that it is difficult to get this information to the right people within parishes or that the information is not being read.

Adjournment and Closing Prayer

The Prime Bishop memorialized the following who served the PNCC and the Supreme Council and recently passed: Father Senior Fryderyk Banas, Father Felix Pyzowski, Father Thomas Sheha, Gordon Bialasik, Ernest Gazda ESQ, John Ostrowski, David Petrosky, and Joseph Seliga. Father Senior Banas and Father Pyzowski were the oldest priests of the PNCC.

The Prime Bishop and the Supreme Council expressed thanks to Bishop and Mrs. Sobiechowski and the members of Holy Trinity Cathedral for hosting the meeting. The members of the Supreme Council offered them a round of applause. Prime Bishop Mikovsky also thanked everyone for attending the meeting and for their contributions during the meeting. Bishop Sobiechowski offered the closing prayers followed by the singing of the Church Hymn.

Submitted by Michael R Mietlicki, Secretary of the Supreme Council



Buffalo-Pittsburgh Diocese

**Holy Family Parish 2023 Events
McKeesport, PA**

This year, Holy Family Parish, McKeesport, PA, hosted the 2023 Buffalo-Pittsburgh Spring Clergy Conference followed by the Mass of Christm. Pictured:



The Rt. Rev. John Mack is greeted by the Holy Family Parish Council after being escorted by both the Y.M.S. of R. ushers and SAMBS ladies to the parish sanctuary.



The priests of the diocese during the blessing of Holy Oils

Holy Family parish celebrated the 25th Anniversary of Frank Pociask as the Lajkoniki Polish Dance Troupe director with a presentation during Mass.

The parish honored Frank with a engraved stone monument to be mounted under the Tree of Life located in the narthex of the parish. A floral presentation was given to Rose Mary Pociask for her valuable help.

Following the presentation and Holy Mass, a reception was held in the Parish Hall. Many of the past and present dancers were present.

The popular Lajkoniki Dancers perform throughout Pennsylvania, Ohio, and New York at many festivals and events and are good ambassadors of Holy Family Parish



Fr. Bruce Sleczkowski, Frank Pociask, Rose Mary Pociask and a portion of the Lajkoniki dancers



A collage of pictures and newspaper articles throughout the years of the Lajkoniki Dancers under the direction of Frank Pociask highlighting performances at the PA State Capital building, for the Polish Ambassador and local events.

There were two 50th Wedding Anniversary blessing held this year in Holy Family Parish



Fr. Sleczkowski blesses Thomas and Virginia Popovic on their 50th Wedding Anniversary.

(Continued on Page 14.)

(Holy Family Parish- Continued from Page 13.)



Father Sleczkowski blesses Edward and Joan Nock on their 50th Wedding Anniversary.

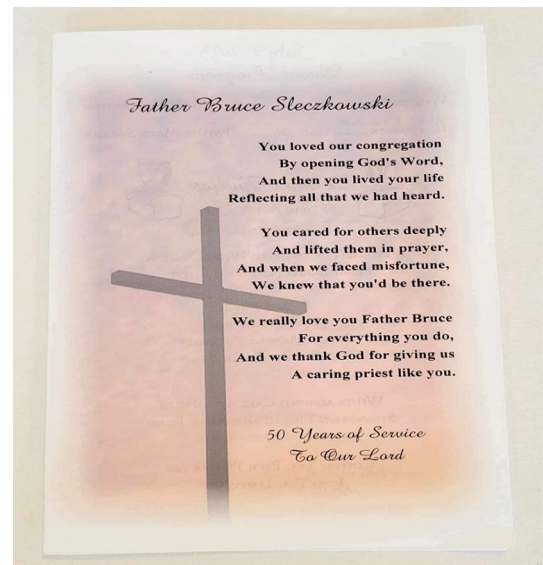
Holy Family honored Mrs. Carol Davelli for her many years as Choral Director of the Frederic Chopin Choir. Carol brought innovative arrangements to the music repertoire during Sunday Masses and concerts. Along with Mrs. Wendy Blotzer, parish organist and Annunciation Bell Choir, the music ministry at Holy Family Parish is renowned



Carol and Fr. Bruce pointing to her stone of appreciation under the Tree of Life in the Holy Family Narthex.

Father Bruce announced his retirement effective July 2, 2023, after 51 years of service. Although Father wanted to retire quietly, the parish and organizations thought otherwise with a Retirement Luncheon at the Butler's Country Club. Two sections of the banquet

hall were needed to accommodate the well-wishers. There were presentations and remarks made, highlighting the pastorate of Fr. Bruce along with a video presentation of Father Bruce's years of the priesthood. Priests of the Southern Seniorate and local clergy of McKeesport were present to honor Father Bruce. More pictures can be found on Holy Family Facebook page.



Many of the attendees at the retirement luncheon



Clergy and wives of the Southern Seniorate: Fr.. Dr. Joseph & Tamara Mazurkiewicz, Mrs. Mary Ann Pyzowski, Marian and Fr. Bruce Sleczkowski, Fr. Mark & Miriam Swoger, and Fr. Michael Selep.



Father Bruce Sleczkowski celebrating his last Mass as pastor of Holy Family with a full Church present.

Former altar servers came out of retirement to be with Father Bruce during his last Mass, which made Father Bruce speechless and almost brought to tears. Other former servers that couldn't attend contacted Father and expressed that they were with him in spirit. It was an emotional Mass for all.

Following Mass, Father Bruce was escorted by the Y.M.S. of R. members during the recessional. A video of the Mass can be seen on the parish Facebook page.



Present and Former Acolytes with Fr. Bruce

On July 30th, Fr. Mariusz Mularczyk was officially appointed Pastor by the Rt. Rev. John Mack. (Father Mariusz officially will be installed by the Very Rev. Robert Pleczkowski during Mass on August 6, 2023.)

Following the Mass, the parish hosted a Meet and Greet Brunch in the Parish Hall.



Father Mariusz, Isabella, and Johnny



Father Bruce handing all the Church keys to Father Mariusz



Father Mariusz giving his first blessing to the congregation as pastor of Holy Family Parish.



Submitted by Rev. Bruce Sleczkowski

Central Diocese

Holy Mother of Sorrows Parish News Dupont, PA

The Sacrament of Baptism was administered to Carson Paul Guzman by Very Rev. Zbigniew Dawid, Pastor of Holy Mother of Sorrows Parish, Dupont, PA, on Saturday, July 8, 2023.

Congratulations to parents Sara & Michael Guzman and godparents Jia Heiser and Paul Kaspriskie III.



Holy Mother of Sorrows Parish sponsored "Dupont Weekend" which serves as a spiritual, recreational, and fraternal activity for members of the parish congregation. The event was held at the Bishop Hodur Retreat and Recreation Center in Waymart, PA on July 28-30, 2023.

Parishioners and friends relaxed amidst the beautiful scenery and serenity at the retreat center and the surrounding grounds. Attendees enjoyed activities such as hiking, swimming, golfing, games, trivia, a cookout by the swimming pool or just reading a book. The highlight of the weekend was the celebration of the Holy Mass on Saturday, followed by a family-style dinner.

Submitted by Very Rev. Zbigniew Dawid



✝ **śp. Loretta (Władysława) Mikovsky**



Loretta (Władysława) Mikovsky entered into the rest of the Lord on August 2, 2023 at Allied Services Skilled Nursing and Rehabilitation Center in Scranton, PA. Born July 26, 1933 in Trenton, NJ, she was the daughter of the late Joseph and Mary (Dombrowski) Ewaskiewicz. She was the widow of the late Anthony J. Mikovsky who passed in 2011. They were married for 48 years. She resided in Hamilton, NJ until recently moving to Scranton, PA in May to be closer to her son.

Loretta attended Trenton schools and was a school teacher in the Trenton School District for many years after receiving her Bachelor's and Master's Degrees from Trenton State College, now the College of New Jersey. After her retirement she continued to work as a substitute teacher in Hamilton Township, NJ.

Loretta was a faithful member of Our Saviour Parish in Lawrenceville, NJ, where she served for many years on the Parish Committee and the Women's Society for the Adoration of the Most Blessed Sacrament. At the parish she worked at the many church breakfasts and events and always made sure that the church building was immaculately clean.

Loretta enjoyed events with family, especially the summer picnics held on her property. She also loved to read and make crafts, usually given to the family with their Christmas presents.

Loretta is survived by a son, Most Rev. Anthony Mikovsky, Prime Bishop of the Polish National Catholic Church and his wife, Carol. She is also survived by a sister-in-law, Laura Ewaskiewicz; a sister-in-law, June Didun; and many nieces and nephews, along with their children. In particular, Chris Ewaskiewicz and Loretta Cramer were her caregivers in Hamilton, NJ.

Loretta was preceded in death by her siblings, Amelia Dzisinta, Helen Murl, Floryan Ewaskiewicz, Arthur Ewaskiewicz, Boleslaw Ewaskiewicz, and Wanda Ewaskiewicz.

A Funeral Mass was celebrated by her Prime Bishop Mikovsky on Monday, August 14, 2023, at Our Saviour Parish, Lawrenceville, NJ.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations are requested for the P.N.C.C. Clergy Pension Fund, 1006 Pittston Avenue, Scranton, PA 18505 or Our Saviour Parish, 2300 Princeton Pike, Lawrenceville, NJ 08648.

Eternal rest grant unto her, O Lord. And let perpetual light shine upon her.



Eastern Diocese

Blessed Trinity Parish Happenings Fall River, MA

On July 19th, Blessed Trinity Parish began hosting the weekly *The Veteran's' Kitchen* luncheons. Many veterans were served by the volunteers from the Home Depot and Veteran's' Kitchen of Fall River on the inaugural day of this weekly event.



On July 21st, Blessed Trinity Parish donated 30 fleece (prayer) blankets to Southpointe Rehab and Skilled Care and also donated to the Emergency Food and Toiletry Cupboard of United Neighbors of Fall River.

Many thanks to Marie Gorgol for her time and love making so many prayer blankets for others. The Southpointe patients were so thrilled and appreciative as was Chelsie from United Neighbors. Discipleship continues and so blessed to serve and help others in the name of Jesus!



Western Diocese

✠ **śp. Rt. Rev. Jarosław (Jerry) Rafalko**



Right Reverend Jarosław Rafalko, Bishop Ordinary of the Western Diocese, Polish National Catholic Church, Pastor of All Saints Cathedral Polish National Catholic Church, passed away on July 13, 2023 at the age of 68.

Bishop Rafalko was the beloved husband of 33 years to Leslie ‘Wiesława’; cherished son of the late Wanda and Jan Rafalko; loving brother of Elzbieta (Jozef) Wasilewski and the late Janina (Stanislaw) Serwin; dearest uncle of Anna (Dominik) Dym, Artur (Cortney Johnson), Piotr (Wioletta) Gryko, Michal (Iwona) Gryko and Grzegorz (Beata) Gryko; great-uncle of Aleksander Dym, Damian Johnson Wasilewski and Piotr Gryko; dear son-in-law of Eugenia and the late Stefan Czaban; loved brother-in-law of Barbara Czaban and Alicja (Mikołaj) Gryko.

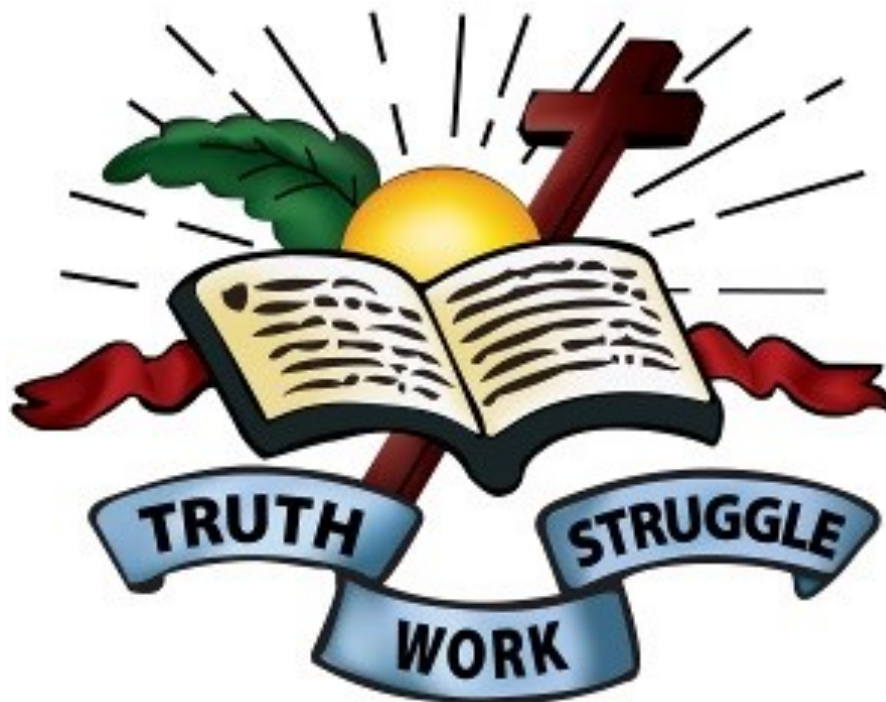
Jarosław was ordained to the Priesthood on June 8, 1980 in Białystok, Poland by Bishop Edward Kisiel. He served in Białystok at St. Bartholomew Parish and St. Andrew Bobola Parish before coming to the United States. He served for a short time at SS. Cyril & Methodius Parish and St. John’s Parish in Chicago before being assigned to Holy Trinity Parish in Kewanee, IL, in March of 1990, where he served until his election as Candidate for Bishop. He was assigned as Administrative Senior of the North Central Seniorate of the Western Diocese in August of 2016.

At the Special Synod held in Scranton, PA on October 25, 2019, Fr. Sr. Rafalko was elected as a Candidate for Bishop and with several delays due to the Covid pandemic, he was consecrated as a bishop on the Solemnity of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, September 14, 2020 at St. Stanislaus Cathedral in Scranton, PA. He was installed as Diocesan Bishop of the Western Diocese and pastor of All Saints Cathedral in Chicago, IL on October 3, 2020. As Western Diocesan Ordinary, Bishop Jarosław visited most of the Diocesan parishes and was an active participant in the Commission work of the Western Diocese and National Church.

Bishop Rafalko lay in repose at All Saints Cathedral on Sunday, July 23, 2023 from 3:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. and on Monday, July 24, 2023 from 2:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. The Requiem Vespers were celebrated at 7:00 p.m. by Bishop Paul Sobiechowski with Prime Bishop Emeritus Robert Nemkovich delivering the sermon. Words of condolence were also extended in Polish and Spanish. The Funeral Mass was celebrated on Tuesday, July 25, 2023 by Prime Bishop Anthony Mikovsky together with all of the bishops of the Church. The Lauds before Mass were celebrated by Bishop John Mack and the Absolution was celebrated by Bishop Bernard Nowicki. Fr. Sr. Charles Zawistowski, Administrator of the Western Diocese preached the funeral homily. In lieu of flowers, donations will be used for a future scholarship in the Bishop’s name or a donation to the Youth Fund of the Polish National Catholic Church would be appreciated.

Eternal rest grant unto him, O Lord. And let perpetual light shine upon him.





(P.N.C.C. Future Direction August Message - Continued from Page 4.)

As Jesus gives the second commandment, we remind ourselves that He does not really give it a second place status. He says that the second one is like the first: “Love your neighbor as yourself.” This commandment shows us how we are to make the love of God a truly sacrificial work of the Church. Our love is not just an internal state or an intention of the mind; our love of God and neighbor is something that must be lived out in every aspect of our lives. In the second Scriptural quote from the Gospel of St. Mark, Jesus says that He came to serve, not to be served. In reflecting on this we see that the love of God cannot just be something that is internal. We can’t love God only in our hearts or in our minds. It must be external.

As we pray we often say that we seek to unite our own life to that of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. As we reflect on these Two Commandments of Love, to embrace the sacrificial work of the Church, let us seek to live out the words of our Lord and say with Him that we come ‘not to be served, but to serve.’”

Action Item

As we reflect on the Two Commandments of Love, when we gather for Holy Mass, hear the Word of God and receive Jesus truly present in Holy Communion, let us pray and strive to increase our love for God: in what we think, in what we say, in how we act and in everything that we do. Let us realize that it is in our interactions with others, with our immediate family, with our parish family and within all of society, that we have the opportunity to put the sacrificial work and love of the Church into action. Pray the Act of Love from the P.N.C.C. Prayer Book and then strive to make this prayer a reality.

Act of Love – O God, I love You above all things with my whole heart and soul. You are worthy of all love. I also love my neighbor as myself just as You have commanded me to do, because of my love for You. In living this love I will forgive those who have injured me and I will ask pardon of all whom I have injured.

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