

God's Field

100th Anniversary



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Are You Ready for the Invitation?

Most Rev. Anthony Mikovsky, Prime Bishop

As we approach the end of the liturgical year, the Gospel readings during Holy Mass begin to place an emphasis on the end times and an understanding of the Kingdom of God. These lessons are most often presented to us in the form of parables. We will hear a number of them over the next several weeks. In hearing them, we must remind ourselves that parables are given to us so that we may spend time in contemplating all that is said within them. There is never just one lesson, but often many which can be applied to various aspects of our lives.

On the Twenty-Eighth Sunday of this Ordinary Time this year, we hear one such parable of our Lord. "Once more Jesus spoke to them in parables, saying: 'The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a wedding banquet for his son. He sent his slaves to call those who had been invited to the wedding banquet, but they would not come. Again he sent other slaves, saying, "Tell those who have been invited: Look, I have prepared my dinner, my oxen and my fat calves have been slaughtered, and everything is ready; come to the wedding banquet.'" But they made light of it and went away, one to his farm, another to his business, while the rest seized his slaves, mistreated them and killed them.'" (Matthew 22:1-6)

At a first level we know that we too, as followers of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, have been invited to a banquet. It is the banquet that is set before us

each and every time we gather for Holy Mass. During the celebration of Mass we are fed and sustained on the Word of God as it is presented to us in the readings of Holy Mass and opened further within the Sacrament of the Word of God, the homily. We are then further fed with the food of eternal life, the Holy Eucharist, Holy Communion, which is the very Body and Blood of our Lord. But when we consider the parable, and consider the response of the invitees, we ask, why would anyone not come to the banquet given by the king? In the context of the parable it seems like such a foolish and short-sighted thing to do. Certainly any other thing we had to do, however important it might be, could just wait a while.

The problem is that we do not apply this conclusion to ourselves. How many, including ourselves, have found some reason why we do not attend the banquet of life that is set before us each and every week. So often something comes up that we think is just so important that we must attend to it rather than come to the banquet that is the Holy Sacrifice of Mass.

This is especially true when we realize that the banquet will go on if we do not choose to come. Others will be invited and the work of the kingdom will continue. If we do not attend the banquet we are excluding ourselves from the work of the kingdom. The parable continues: "Then [the king] said to his slaves, 'The wedding is ready, but those invited were not

(Continued on Page 3.)

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**God’s Field — Rola Boża
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worthy. Go therefore into the main streets, and invite everyone you find to the wedding banquet.’ Those slaves went out into the streets and gathered all whom they found, both good and bad; so the wedding hall was filled with guests.” (Matthew 22:8-10)

In reflection on this portion of the Gospel reading, we realize two important aspects of the parable. First is that the banquet is not just for some special guests. We can never say that only certain sorts of people are invited. All are invited and are then able to participate fully in the banquet. The king might send invitations in different ways, but all are invited and welcome. For ourselves we realize that individuals may come to the church in various ways. Some are a part of the worshipping community from the time they were very young. They might have been raised in families that come to the Church. Others come when they first begin to understand the stirring of a spiritual life when they begin to attain maturity. Others may come at later, even much later, periods in their life. But all are invited, and all are welcome. A second matter is that the banquet will not wait for any individual. The king did not postpone the banquet in hopes that the invitees will eventually figure it out. The invitation is made and the banquet time is set. We only have a limited period of time within our lives to answer the invitation. Our time on this earth is limited, the span of our life is limited, so we then must not delay in answering the invitation of Almighty God to attend the banquet.

The parable also has a final lesson for those who are attending the banquet as well. The parable continues: “But when the king came in to see the guests, he noticed a man there who was not wearing a wedding robe, and he said to him, ‘Friend, how did you get in here without a wedding robe?’ And he was speechless. Then the king said to the attendants, ‘Bind him hand and foot, and throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’ For many are called, but few are chosen.” (Matthew 22:11-14)

As we reflect on this portion of the parable, we are reminded that accepting the invitation puts certain requirements on us. In the immediate way we know that when we attend the banquet that is the Eucharist we must be ready to prepare ourselves to participate. We begin with our preparation before attending Holy Mass. We must spend some time in spiritual prepara-

tion. We must examine our conscience to prepare ourselves to take the Sacrament of Penance seriously. We must be intentional about our worship in that we enter into it in a profound way. We must prepare ourselves to receive Jesus Christ, truly present in the Blessed Sacrament.

As we spend some time with this parable, we must realize that we have been invited to the best of all banquets possible. We have been invited to join our Lord Jesus Christ in the Eucharistic banquet set by the Almighty Father. We must make sure to make this a priority within our lives. No amount of work or business, or any other important item in our lives can take precedence before this vital and important part of our daily living.

We must also remind ourselves that there are responsibilities when we attend this banquet. We must prepare ourselves in moments of prayer and in the Sacrament of Penance. We must be intent to immerse ourselves in the liturgical readings and seek to gain more strength and understanding within the Sacrament of the Word of God. Finally we must accept the Eucharistic gifts with profound gratitude and thanksgiving that our Lord Jesus has shared His life with us.

And we must also be aware that even with these preparations that must be performed, that the opportunity to attend this Eucharistic Banquet is the highest of all honors possible. It is the place where we encounter the Lord Himself. It is the place where we are fed the food of eternal life. It is the place where we participate in the work of the kingdom. Ultimately, it is the culmination of our joy as Catholic Christians. It is for this reason that we refer to the celebration of Holy Mass as the summit of our life of worship and work.

My brothers and sisters, know that you have been invited. Answer the invitation by making sure that you put nothing ahead of the worship of Almighty God and the reception of His Son in Holy Communion. Be prepared for this banquet by your life of prayer and participation in the Sacraments. Come to the banquet set by the Almighty Father. Participate in it fully that through this celebration you may participate fully in the worship of God and the work of the Kingdom.



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September 15, 2023
 Holy Mother of Sorrows

To: The Clergy and Members of the Polish Catholic Church in the Republic of Poland
 The Clergy and Parishes of the Polish National Catholic Church

Re: The Status of the Communion between
 the Polish National Catholic Church in the United States and Canada (PNCC)
 and the Polish Catholic Church in the Republic of Poland (PKK)

My brothers and sisters,

It was with great sadness that the Polish National Catholic Church heard of the news of the purported consecration of bishops of the Polish Catholic Church in the Republic of Poland by Bishops of the Union of Utrecht. This because for over a century the Polish Catholic Church had journeyed together with us as sister churches in a common faith and common witness. The Church in Poland was first as a diocese within the PNCC until 1951 and following that we operated as true sister churches, co-equal in faith but independent in administration.

From 1975 to 1987 the Old Catholic Churches and the Orthodox Churches met to craft and accept a number of statements regarding the content of the apostolic teachings of the Churches. Through these years, both the Polish Catholic Church in the Republic of Poland and the Polish National Catholic Church of the United States and Canada were participants. The agreed statements of the Old Catholic Churches together with the Orthodox Churches, given in the publication "Road to Unity" mention that "The necessity of maintaining apostolic succession both as the continuity of apostolic teaching and as the passing on of ordained ministry and its grace of mission by the lawful laying on of hands is the teaching of the Church Fathers in general." The Bishops of the Union of Utrecht do not continue to maintain this apostolic teaching in that they hold a flawed sacramentology and ecclesiology. In particular, this regrettable condition contravenes statements within the "Road to Unity" regarding Ordination, with the ordination of women to the priesthood and recently to the episcopacy, and Matrimony, with the blessing of same-sex unions.

It was for these reasons in 1996, the Poland National Catholic Church entered into an impaired communion with the other Churches of the Union of Utrecht, except for the Polish Catholic Church, since they began to ordain and recognize the ordination of women in opposition to the agreed statements. This was viewed as an innovation within the apostolic teaching of the Church and a break with those who held the traditional faith. In 2003, the European Old Catholic Churches stated that they would not allow this impaired communion to continue. Since the Polish National Catholic Church would not endorse or accept this innovation in the teaching and witness of the Church, it was removed from the Union of Utrecht.

By the action of participating in a ceremony of episcopal consecration with these Union of Utrecht Bishops, the Polish Catholic Church in the Republic of Poland has sacramentally and ecclesially joined themselves with Churches that do not hold the apostolic teaching. By this action, the leaders of the Polish Catholic Church in the Republic of Poland have broken their communion with the Polish National Catholic Church in the United States and Canada.

As a consequence of this action by the Polish Catholic Church in the Republic of Poland:

- The clergy of the Polish Catholic Church may not celebrate the Eucharistic Sacrifice within Polish National Catholic parishes and the clergy of the Polish National Catholic Church may not celebrate within the parishes of the Polish Catholic Church.
- There is to be no concelebration of the Eucharist with clergy of the Polish Catholic Church.
- Likewise, the members of the Polish National Catholic Church should not receive communion from priests of the Polish Catholic Church.

It is with great sorrow that these matters must be brought forward with our reaction, but however, the agreed statements of the "Road to Unity" which both the Polish National Catholic Church of the United States and Canada as well as the Polish Catholic Church in the Republic of Poland have fully accepted leave us no other choice but to do so.

Praying that the sisterly unity of our Churches will one day be restored, we remain,
In Christ Jesus, our Lord,

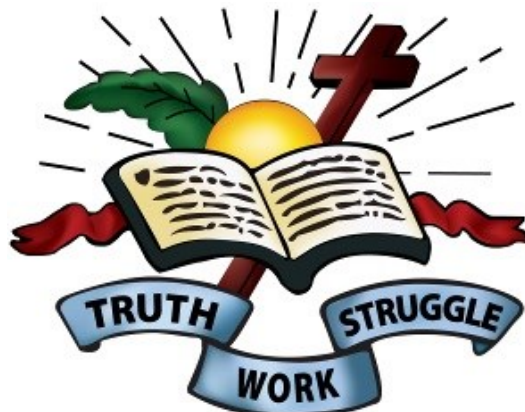


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P.N.C.C. Future Direction October 2023

An Integral Part of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church

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. We have made resolutions to participate more fully within the worship and Eucharistic life of the Church. We have resolved to embrace the Two Commandments of Love in seeking ways to increase and show our love for God and love for neighbor. We have taken up the challenge to walk the pathways of Christian discipleship which has been laid out for us throughout the history of the Church. In this month's reflections we resolve to join all of these things together to plainly show the Polish National Catholic Church to be an integral part of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church founded by Christ and professed within the Creed.

Scripture

Matthew 16:15-18 – [Jesus] 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.”

Romans 12:4-5 – For as in one body we have many members, and not all the members have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another.

Ephesians 2:19-22 – So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are citizens with the saints and also members of the household of God, build upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus Himself as the cornerstone. In Him the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord; in Whom you also are built together spiritually into a dwelling place for God.

Reflection

Within the resolving portion of the XXVI General Synod Resolution, we begin the closing portion by stating that all of the individual things that we resolve to do serve to “plainly show the Polish National Catholic Church to be an integral part of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church founded by Christ and professed within the Creed.”

These are words that we proclaim when we gather for Holy Mass on each Sunday. They are found within the Nicene Creed which is recited by all God's believing people together before the liturgy of the Eucharist begins. As a start let us consider exactly what we are saying then as faithful members of the Church. The Catechism of the Polish National Catholic Church explains what each of these words entails. They are known as the ‘marks’ of the Church. The Catechism states: The Polish National Catholic Church is ‘One’ because all its member believe in one God and in one Lord, Jesus Christ the head of the Church. This is a unity of faith, which not only stretches across the church today, but also binds us together with the church of all ages. The Polish National Catholic Church is ‘Holy’ because its Founder and Head Jesus Christ is holy, its sacraments leading us to salvation are holy and its object is holy. We see here that the word ‘holy’ also means something that is set apart. In naming these things as holy we profess that this work of Jesus is something that is beyond ourselves and in fact beyond our world. We participate in this work of the church, in this work of participation in the sacraments, but they are truly unearned gifts of God. The Polish National Catholic Church is ‘catholic’ because it teaches all the gospel of Jesus Christ which is universal, everlasting and unchanging. This reminds us that the teachings and faith of the Church is not something that can or will change with the times. It is rather that we must bring our living into line with the gospel teachings of Jesus. The Polish National Catholic Church is ‘apostolic’ because its spirit of teaching and its institutions are apostolic. The Church upholds all of the apostolic teaching given to us by Jesus Christ through the Apostles.

When we proclaim this faith within our recitation of the Nicene Creed we must remind ourselves that it is not a proclamation of something that is separate from us as individual members of the Catholic faith. When we proclaim the Church as one, holy, catholic and apostolic we too participate in these marks of the church. Our faith, our work, our worship, as individuals and even more so when we gather as the body of Christ, which is the Church, in an expression of these marks of the Church.

(Continued on bottom of Page 7.)

2024 Liturgical Reference Calendar (Ordo) Order Form

The updates for the 2024 Liturgical Reference Calendar – Ordo – are underway, and now is the time to put in your parish's, pastor's/administrator's, organist's and/or personal orders!

The cost of the 2024 Ordo is \$12.75 per book for pick-up orders or \$17.00 per book for mail orders to U.S. (Please email secretarytopb@pncc.org for Canada shipping costs prior to ordering your Ordo(s).)

To order your 2024 Ordo(s), please fill out the order form, below, and mail it with your payment to:

The Polish National Catholic Church – L R C
Attn: Secretary to Prime Bishop
1006 Pittston Avenue
Scranton, PA 18505

Your Ordo(s) will be shipped to you as soon as they return from the printer (late November timeframe).

2024 ORDO Order Form			
Clergy/Parish/Individual Name and Shipping Address:			
Description of Item	# of copies	Cost per Item	Subtotal
2024 Liturgical Reference Calendar (Ordo); \$12.75 pickup; \$17.00 w/U.S. Shipping; \$12.75 PLUS SHIPPING TO CANADA			
2024 ORDO			Total Remitted
TOTAL DUE			
Please make check (in U.S. Dollars) payable to: Polish National Catholic Church – LRC			
Thank you for your payment.			

(P.N.C.C. Future Direction - Continued from Page 6.)

Action Item

As we reflect on these words that we profess each time we gather for Holy Mass, we should ask ourselves if we are contributing to help sustain these marks of the Church in our own lives and in our worshipping community. Do I contribute to the unity of my family, my parish, the church and among all Christian people? Do I treat the sacraments and all religious items as the holy things that they are? Do I set aside time within my own daily life to attain the holiness of life that the Sacraments call me to? Do I believe and profess all our Lord has taught me through the Church or do I only hold those points of faith which are easy? Do I seek to follow the teachings of the Apostles in their words and actions, especially as recorded within the Scriptures?

Do I also realize that all of the items that have been resolved in this proclamation of the XXVI General Synod fall entirely into line with this understanding: To participate in the Eucharist and the entire Sacramental life of the Church, To seek enlightenment from the Sacred Scriptures, To embrace and fulfill the Two Commandments of Love, To align my life along the pathways of Christian discipleship. These are all a part of being fully united to Christ in the Church which is one, holy, catholic and apostolic.

As we spend time in prayer each Sunday at Holy Mass after proclaiming the Creed. Let us ask Almighty God for the strength to allow us to live united to Christ through the Church and to bring our own lives into unity with His.

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

2024 Home Liturgical (Wall) Calendar Order Form

The Polish National Catholic Church will have full color 2024 home liturgical calendars for sale on a first-come, first-served basis. This calendar with original photographs for each month includes information concerning P.N.C.C. holy days. We urge you to order calendars for your parish or for yourself as soon as possible because our supply is very limited.

Calendar prices have remained the same as last year's; however, shipping costs have increased. The chart below can be used for calculating your costs for shipping to U.S. destinations. (For shipping outside of the U.S., please email the number of calendars you are requesting to secretarytopb@pncc.org and an email with shipping costs for your order will be sent to you.)

PLEASE NOTE that an additional \$30.00 is required for ad setup for sponsor information and specific parish information regarding Sunday services, telephone numbers, name of pastor, etc.

Please place your order and send in your payment to **P.N.C.C. Center, Attention: Julie Orzell, 1006 Pittston Avenue, Scranton, PA, 18505** so that we can ship your calendars to you before the New Year. Hurry and get your orders in because this year's stock is even more limited, and once we have run out of stock, no more will be printed! The calendars will be shipped as soon as they arrive from the printer.

Thank you for your continued support of this Church-wide endeavor. If you pick up your order at the National Church Center, there will be no shipping charge.

Quantity	Cost per Calendar	Calendar Cost Subtotal	U.S. Shipping	U.S. Total	Shipping Method
1	\$5.50	\$5.50	\$2.55	\$8.05	USPS First Class
2	\$5.50	\$11.00	\$3.75	\$14.75	USPS First Class
3	\$5.50	\$16.50	\$4.70	\$21.20	USPS Media Mail
4	\$5.50	\$22.00	\$4.70	\$26.70	USPS Media Mail
5	\$5.50	\$27.50	\$4.70	\$31.75	USPS Media Mail
6	\$5.50	\$33.00	\$5.45	\$32.20	USPS Media Mail
7	\$5.50	\$38.50	\$5.45	\$43.95	USPS Media Mail
8	\$5.50	\$44.00	\$5.45	\$49.45	USPS Media Mail
9	\$5.50	\$49.50	\$6.17	\$55.67	USPS Media Mail
10	\$5.50	\$55.00	\$6.17	\$61.17	USPS Media Mail
11	\$5.50	\$60.50	\$6.17	\$66.67	USPS Media Mail
12	\$5.50	\$66.00	\$6.17	\$72.17	USPS Media Mail
13	\$5.50	\$71.50	\$6.92	\$78.42	USPS Media Mail
14	\$5.50	\$77.00	\$6.92	\$83.92	USPS Media Mail
15	\$5.50	\$82.50	\$6.92	\$89.42	USPS Media Mail
16 - 50	\$5.50	\$88.00 - \$275.00	\$22.80	\$110.80 - \$297.80	USPS Large Flat Rate Box
51+	\$5.50	\$280.50	*Calculated at time of shipping		UPS

*An invoice for shipping costs will be included in your shipment.

Only paid calendar orders will be shipped.

**If you have a sponsor paying for your calendars, please inform them that they must pay for the cost of the calendars prior to them being shipped out.
We will send invoices only for extra cost of shipping)**

(You will be invoiced for shipping costs if they must be calculated at the time of packing.)

2023 P.N.C.C. Calendar Order Form

<u>Shipping Information</u>	<u># of Calendars</u>	<u>Cost of Calendars</u>	<u>Ad Fee</u> (if applicable)	<u>Shipping Cost</u> (if calculable)*	<u>Total Enclosed</u>
Name					
Address					
City, State Zip Code					

*PLEASE NOTE: We cannot predetermine the cost of shipping on orders of 51 or more calendars because this cost is calculated by weight and geographic location of recipient. You will be invoiced for this cost in your shipment.

Buffalo-Pittsburgh Diocese

Transfiguration of Our Lord Parish Picnic

Mt. Pleasant, PA

On Sunday, September 10th, the Solemnity of Brotherly Love, Transfiguration of Our Lord Parish in Mt. Pleasant, PA, held its annual Parish Picnic after Sunday Mass. It was a huge success.

Many thanks to everyone who brought delicious food for all to enjoy, to those who set up the Social Room and to those who cleaned up afterward. A special thanks to Mary Beth Kurpiel for being the auctioneer for the auction and for serving at the Sunday Ice Cream Bar. Also a special thanks goes out to Dolores Nicol for being the Bingo Caller and to Abigail and Nathan Stewart for helping with both games. It was a fun day for everyone.



St. Barbara's Parish, Houtzdale, PA Participates in Local Harvest Festival

Tipton PA

Since its establishment in the 1970s, St. Barbara's Parish in Houtzdale, PA has been an active participant in DelGrosso Park's Harvest Festival in Tipton, PA. In fact, it is one of the parish's primary fundraisers. This year, on September 18th, the parish again participated in the festival.

The skilled parish cooks showcased their exquisite, authentically Polish dishes such as pierogi, kielbasi, and haluski. Beyond the culinary delights, these activities serve a more profound purpose – they allow St. Barbara's Parish to uphold our Church's mission of spreading the message of peace, love, and solidarity. The parish hosts a multitude of activities and events throughout the year to achieve this goal.



Holy Trinity Parish Hosts Spaghetti Dinner

Woodlawn, NY

Holy Trinity Parish in Woodlawn, NY, held its 6th Annual All You Can Eat Spaghetti Dinner on September 23, 2023. A delicious dinner consisting of spaghetti and homemade meatballs and sauce, bread, salad, homemade desserts and beverages was served. A 50/50 raffle, a Chair of Luck Raffle and a Basket Raffle were also held.

It was a wonderful turnout filled with lots of tasty food, fun and fellowship. Many thanks to everyone who helped put this event together and to everyone who attended.



Central Diocese

Dożynki

Holy Mother of Sorrows Parish, Dupont, PA

In keeping with the traditions, customs, culture and food recipes of Poland, a treasure to cherish, left to us by our ancestors of our Polish heritage, Holy Mother of Sorrows Parish in Dupont, PA, conducted its Annual Polish Harvest Festival Dożynki on Sunday, September 10, 2023.

The Blessing of the Harvest Wreath opened the Festival. As participants passed by the Harvest Wreath everyone received a greeting and partook of a treat of bread, cheese and wine as a token of good luck. There was live polka music, a big raffle, basket raffle and games for the children.

Of course, lots of food was available: potato pancakes, pierogi, gołąbki (stuffed cabbage), kluski (haluski), kiełbasa, kiełbasa w/kraut, sausage, sausage w/peppers, clam chowder, hot dogs, hot dogs w/kraut, hamburgers, cheeseburgers, funnel cakes, baked goods, etc.

We thank all our volunteers for hard work and all patrons for supporting us. Submitted by Very Rev. Zbigniew Dawid



Good Shepherd Polish National Catholic Church in Plymouth celebrating 125 years
By Bill O'Boyle, Staff Writer, Times Leader Media Group
Published September 10, 2023



PLYMOUTH — The Very Rev. Lucian Urbaniak of the Good Shepherd Polish National Catholic Church in Plymouth said the church's 125th anniversary celebration is very special and meaningful because so many churches are being closed and discontinuing their mission.

"Our anniversary celebration will be Holy Mass of Thanksgiving, Sept 30, at 3 p.m., followed by a program and dinner dance at R&D Memories in Hanover Township," Urbaniak said. "The holy mass is the main celebration of our 125th anniversary. Our Prime Bishop Anthony Mikovsky, our ordinary Bishop Bernard Nowicki and several priests will be invited, especially those who were pastors or involved in the ministry of the church in the past.

"The most significant moment is gathering around the Eucharistic celebration which is the heart of our faith."

Urbaniak said, "We are happy that some members of our faith community are not Polish or of Polish descent. We are open to anyone who is searching for spiritual growth and a relationship with Jesus Christ."

Urbaniak said since the church is an Apostolic Church, members feel especially connected with the church which Jesus Christ intended and historically started as he sent his apostles into the world to baptize in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

"Our Polish National Catholic Church is a pristine church," Urbaniak said. "We share and accept and teach the truth before the division of the Christian Church in the 10th century. We hope that we will be able to continue our mission with the very dedicated members that worship in the church."

History

In 1897, Polish immigrants who were parishioners of Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary Roman Catholic Church in the south side of Scranton felt they were treated unjustly by their pastor and bishop.

These parishioners were mostly poor coal mining families who felt they should control their parish property since they built it with their hard-earned money and were taking care of it.

They also asked for laity representation in parish management and respect as they felt they were verbally abused by their pastor. The bishop was petitioned several times without success.

(Continued on Page 12.)

(Good Shepherd P.N.C.C. 125 Years - Continued from Page 11.)

The people took matters into their own hands by forming a picket line around the church to prevent their parish priest from entering. A riot broke out with great violence before the 10:30 a.m. mass.

Some 200 families left this church and sought help from Father Francis Hodur who was a Polish priest in Holy Trinity Roman Catholic church in Nanticoke. He was a former curate of Scranton parish. He felt great compassion for these people, and he advised them to build a new church but retain the title.

The new church was built and was named St. Stanislaus. The Roman Catholic diocesan bishop refused to consecrate it or appoint a pastor.

In March of 1897, 200 families petitioned Father Hodur to be their pastor. Father Hodur tried to get satisfaction from the bishop and even made a trip to Rome to see the pope without success.

In Rome, Father Hodur was told that they must submit to the diocesan bishops and respect their wishes because the church of Rome is largely financed by money from American bishops.

The petition signed by the parish committee begged the Holy See namely:

1. That the title to church property be vested in the local parish church.
2. That parishes be free to choose a parish committee without interference on the part of the priest or bishop
3. That they can choose their own priest

The congregation of St. Stanislaus decided to work together for their own church under their Pastor, Francis Hodur. They were excommunicated from the Roman Catholic Church.

On Feb. 15, 1992, at St. Stanislaus Cathedral, Edward Cardinal Cassidy, President of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, delivered a greeting to the members of the Polish National Catholic church on behalf of Pope John Paul II at a "Service of Healing" held at Saint Stanislaus Cathedral in Scranton.

Bishops of the Roman Catholic and Polish National Catholic churches both read statements regarding the historical circumstances of the relationship between the two churches. During his comments, Cardinal Cassidy stated that they wish to erase from memory and consign to oblivion the censure of excommunication which was pronounced to the Polish National Catholic church.

The Good Shepherd parish in Plymouth was the third Polish National Catholic church to be built. It began in 1897 under the name of St. Mary of Czestochowa.

Approximately 800 parishioners from St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church in Plymouth attended a meeting on June 4, 1898, at the Polish Youth Alliance Hall on West Main Street in Plymouth to hear Father Francis Hodur speak.

These parishioners felt very disrespected and exploited by their present pastor. These Polish immigrants decided to purchase a three-story building at 269 E. Main St. Plymouth, in which liturgies were held on the first floor.

The parish membership at this time was 400 families and they decided to build their church next to this building. On Dec. 26, 1898, the church cornerstone was blessed.

On Dec. 12, 1898, Father Hodur held a special meeting at St. Stanislaus Polish National Catholic church in Scranton. He read a letter to the congregation from Bishop Michael Hoban that he would be willing to accept the Scranton and Plymouth parishes if there were enough parishioners to support them and the title of ownership be immediately transferred to his authority. Father Hodur did not accept Bishop Hoban's proposal.

In 1910, the name of the church was changed again to St. Mary's of Sufferance. There were many trials and triumphs throughout the life of this parish. At one point, in 1910 due to great financial difficulties, the parish property was going to be up for sale. Bishop-elect Hodur purchased it with his own money to try to save the parish.

In 1922, after things stabilized in the parish, the property was transferred back. In 1932, an amendment was made to the charter to change the name of the parish for a third time to Good Shepherd.

In Aug. 1982, a new rectory was built across the street from the church. The nearly 100-year-old rectory which was the original building in 1898 was deteriorating and was torn down.

Two years after the new rectory was built, it was discovered that the church structure was deteriorating due to termite infestation. It was not cost effective to repair the damage, thus the old church was demolished, and a new church was built and dedicated on July 28, 1991. With total dedication and conviction, both properties were built mortgage free.

The church kitchen was not capable of serving the functions of the many fundraisers. Updating needed to be done in 2011/2012. The church and rectory parking lots were repaved in 2016, major landscaping done in 2017, and the interior church was repainted in 2021.

This year has been a very busy year for The Good Shepherd as they have been planning their 125th anniversary.

In honor of the anniversary a journal of the history of the parish will be published and a banner has been placed across the front of the church.

A stone was purchased with the names of parishioners and will be placed in front of the church.

New aprons were purchased with the church emblem and distributed among those who contribute their time so unselfishly making pierogi, baking, and cooking our delicious Polish food.

Tee shirts are currently being designed commemorating the 125th anniversary.

The first time for the Good Shepherd was a parking lot food sale outside in front of the church on Aug 11-12 in conjunction with the Plymouth Alive Kielbasa Festival.

(Continued on bottom of Page 16.)

Good Shepherd Parish Receives Proclamation Plymouth, PA

Representatives of the Good Shepherd Polish National Catholic Church, 269 East Main Street Plymouth, were invited to attend the regular meeting at the Plymouth Borough building on September 12, 2023, to be presented with a proclamation by Mayor Frank Coughlin, celebrating 125 years of outstanding service to the community.



Plymouth, PA Mayor, Frank Coughlin; Pastor, Very Rev. Lucian Urbaniak; Parish Committee Chair, Mike Truskowski

Eastern Diocese

Blessed Trinity Parish Happenings
Fall River, MA

On August 31st, Fr. Sr. Rob Nemkovich, Pastor of Blessed Trinity Parish in Fall River, MA, offered prayer at the International Overdose Awareness Day by Recover Fall River at City Hall. The event gathered many people to stand out against the stigma of addiction, to support those in recovery, to increase education concerning addiction and to help all who need it. During the past year 51 died from overdose in Fall River and we know one is too many.

Always Be Kind and may God bless this ongoing effort to help and support others. Glad to have a few from the parish join us and always nice to see our mayor supporting important events in our city.



A delicious Chicken Parm dinner was prepared and served by The Veteran's' Kitchen at Blessed Trinity Parish on September 6th. Over 75 meals were served on this day. This is an ongoing weekly event to support local veterans.

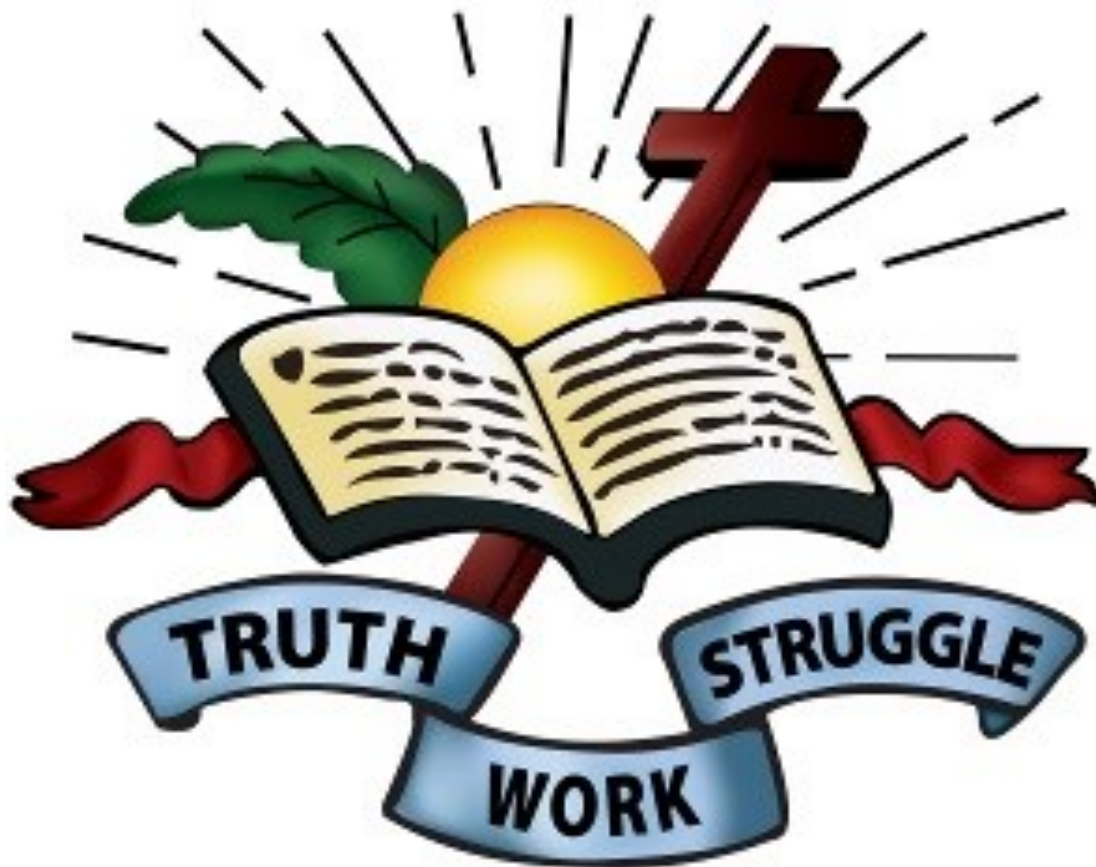


It was truly a blessed day with prayer for the local Veterans Chapter 115 Meet & Greet at Government Center on the Solemnity of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Friday, September 8th. The Meet & Greet is one of many efforts within the Fall River community that helps support local Veterans who have given so much. May God bless them all.



On Sunday, September 10th, the Feast of Brotherly Love, a blessing of the Sunday School students and teachers, a commemoration of World Suicide Prevention Day and the opening of the parish Hygiene Drive were conducted. During Mass the congregation remembered in prayer the lives lost on 9-11-2001 and we also kicked off the parish food drive to help our neighbors.





(Good Shepherd P.N.C.C. 125 Years - Continued from Page 13.)

Urbaniak said the church gratefully acknowledges our diocese for gifting us with a grant to purchase a new digital sign placed in front of our church parking lot.

An anniversary Mass of Thanksgiving will be celebrated on Sept.30 at 3 p.m. Following the Mass, a program, dinner and music by Classic DJ'S will be held at R&D Memories from 5-10 p.m.

Urbaniak said the Polish National Catholic Church is truly Catholic and upholds the doctrine of Apostolic Succession. That means that according to the institution of Christ, the bishops succeed one another in an unbroken chain of succession from the time of Christ himself down through the Apostles and their successors to the present day.

In the early years of the last century the church was courageous in its innovation by saying Mass in the language of the people, Mass facing the people and Holy Communion under both species.

The church property is deeded in the name of the congregation and is the property of the people of that parish. They are the rightful owners of the churches they build, and as such they have the right to participate in the management of the business affairs of their parish, selection of their priests, and in the choice of their bishops.

Their priests are allowed to marry if they wish.

General confession is held during the liturgy of the Holy Mass which is said in English and celebrated every Sunday at 9 a.m. Private confession is held for young people until they reach their 16th birthday.

"Even though our founders were of Polish descent, many different nationalities worship with us," Urbaniak said. "All are welcome."