



Official Publication of the Polish National Catholic Church

Volume 102

June 2024

Issue #6

## Beyond the Ordinary

Most Rev. Anthony Mikovsky, Prime Bishop

As we enter into the summer months, we leave behind the season of Easter and the short season of important solemnities following it and enter into Ordinary Time. During the first part of the liturgical year, we spent our Sundays working through the entire life of our Lord. We waited for His coming during the season of Advent; we celebrated His birth and all it entails during Christmas; we then spend a time in the call of His disciples; we then entered into His passion and sufferings during the Lenten season and finally joyously celebrated our Lord's Resurrection during the Easter season. Following this we celebrated the short season of the beginnings of the Church. We celebrated the birth of the Church during Pentecost; we honored the foundational teaching of the Holy Trinity; we honored Christ present to us in the Holy Eucharist at Corpus Christi and finally in the Polish National Catholic Church we celebrated the Solemnity of the Word of God, how we encounter Christ in His Word in Holy Scripture and its proclamation in our own time.

During Ordinary Time we now will have the extension of this Word of God Solemnity. It is during these Sundays, which we celebrate in the color green, that we delve into the Word of God more fully. This year of 2024 is the second of the liturgical cycles known as Year B. In this year we will focus on the Gospel of St. Mark as the second of the synoptic Gospels. The Gospel of Matthew, Mark and Luke are known as synoptic since they can be "seen together." They contain many of the same episodes and are generally presented in the same sequence. This year as well though, since Mark's Gospel is the shortest of the Gospels, we will also take a journey through the 6<sup>th</sup> chapter of John's Gospel where we will focus on Jesus' teachings regarding the Holy Eucharist given to us there. This will occur on the last Sunday of July and the entire month of August.

Before this occurs, during the months of June and July we will journey through chapters 4, 5 and 6 of the Gospel of Mark. During this time our Lord is engaged in His ministry in the region around the Sea of Galilee. We will encounter the teachings of Jesus in parables, in His performing of miracles and in His healings.

We begin with parables. These teaching stories usually involve items or situations which would be very familiar to those who heard Jesus. He spoke about things such as sowing seed in the ground. This is the first of the difficulties that we have in reflecting on these Ordinary Time Gospels. Although these items and situations would have been very familiar to those hearing Jesus, they might not be familiar to us. In order that we may fully understand what Jesus was telling His followers we must acquaint ourselves with life as it was during Jesus' time in of the area of His ministry.

But even after that, parables are not lessons that are immediately obvious, rather they make us think a little. For instance, in the Gospel from the 11<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time, Jesus says, "This is how it is with the Kingdom of God; it is as if a man were to scatter seed on the land and would sleep and rise night and day and the seed would sprout and grow, he knows not how. Of its own accord the land yields fruit, first the blade, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear. And when the grain is ripe, he wields the sickle at once, for the harvest has come." (Mark 4:26-29)

At first thought we know that this situation is generally true, but what does it tell us about the kingdom of God, the reign of God among us. Although we certainly may know a bit more about how seeds germinate and grow today, we can still certainly say that it is not our own doing that makes plants grow. Just

(Continued on Page 3.)

**Email Addresses  
for the  
P.N.C.C. Office**

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

Prime Bishop Anthony Mikovsky  
pbmikovsky@pncc.org

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

P.N.C.C. Treasurer—Joan Scheuneman  
executive03@pnu.org

God’s Field– Rola Boża Editor—Julie Orzell  
secretarytopb@pncc.org

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

**God’s Field — Rola Boża  
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:

God’s Field  
Polish National Catholic Church  
1006 Pittston Avenue  
Scranton, PA 18505-4109

**Identification Statement**

**The Official Publication of the Polish National Catholic Church, GOD’S FIELD - ROLA BOŻA, is published monthly for the U.S. \$50.00; Canada \$70.00; per subscription year (March through February) by Polish National Catholic Church 1006 Pittston Avenue Scranton, PA 18505-4109**

Individual issues of *God’s Field* are available for purchase from the National Church Center for \$2.25 each (pickup) or prepaid \$4.25 each (U.S.); \$6.00 each (Canada).

**Send payments and address changes to:**

**GOD’S FIELD  
1006 Pittston Avenue  
Scranton, PA 18505-4109**

**CONTROLLER:**

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

Opinions expressed in various articles published in *God’s Field* do not necessarily reflect the doctrine of the P.N.C.C.

**Inside this Issue**

Beyond the Ordinary - Most Rev. Anthony Mikovsky ..... 1  
 June 2024 P.N.C.C. Future Direction Message ..... 4  
 P.N.C.C.—R.C.C. Dialogue Meeting ..... 5  
 Honor Your Father ..... 6  
 Annual Meeting of the Supreme Council of the Polish National Catholic Church (Minutes) ..... 9  
 Annual Celebration at Spójnia Farm ..... 13  
 Spójnia Farm Experience ..... 14  
 Parenting as a Divine Responsibility - Rev. Dr. Stan Jasiurkowski ..... 15  
 10th Annual Y.M.S. of R. Golf Tournament ..... 19  
 Central Diocese ..... 22  
 Eastern Diocese ..... 27  
 Western Diocese ..... 33

(Beyond the Ordinary - Continued from Page 1.)

look at how weeds grow in surprising places without any help or intention from anyone. But we also know that there is a reality to planting as well, which requires our input. If the land is prepared, then the yield of the plants will certainly be increased. There is also the reality that in order to partake of the fruits that come forth, we must come to the harvest and participate in it. The parable allows us to take time after we hear it to see how it applies to our own lives and our own situation. What is the work that needs to be done in my own life to prepare myself to receive the Word of God? How do I harvest the good produce that the kingdom of God brings to my life? We can remind ourselves that within the time of our Lord, all of these actions, the preparing of the fields, the harvesting of the grain, would all take place as community work. So then, we can ask ourselves, how involved within the community of the Church am I in accomplishing its work?

In this Galilee ministry, we will also see our Lord calming the storm while in a boat on the Sea of Galilee. “A violent squall came up and waves were breaking over the boat, so that it was already filling up. Jesus was in the stern, asleep on a cushion. They woke Him and said to Him, ‘Teacher, do You not care that we are perishing?’ He woke up, rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, ‘Quiet! Be still!’ The wind ceased and there was great calm. Then he asked them, ‘Why are you terrified? Do you not yet have faith?’ They were filled with great awe and said to one another, ‘Who then is this Whom even the wind and sea obey?’” (Mark 4:37-41)

Much like a parable, we must ask ourselves what is this miracle striving to teach us. In fact, we must always ask this question. There are no throw-off miracles in the Gospels. Jesus does not just hand them out like prizes. Jesus performs miracles to be examples of how the Kingdom of God breaks into our daily living. In reflection on this miracle, we must certainly know that the storms of life will come upon us at various times and it may feel like we are perishing. But the miracle reminds us that with faith in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, we can find our way through them. In the miracle, Jesus rebukes the winds and the waves, much as He does when casting out evil spirits. This may certainly be the case at times, but the parable above also lets us know that sometimes it will take work and effort on our part as well, as we cooperate with our Lord.

Another teaching that we will encounter on this journey with Jesus in His Galilee ministry are His healings. In particular, one important one is the healing of the women with a hemorrhage. “There was a woman afflicted with hemorrhages for twelve years. ... She heard about Jesus and came up behind Him in the crowd and touched His cloak. She said, ‘If I but touch His clothes, I shall be cured.’ Immediately her flow of blood dried up. She felt in her body that she was healed of her affliction. Jesus, aware at once that power had gone out from Him, turned around in the crowd and asked, ‘Who has touched My clothes?’ ... The woman, realizing what had happened to her, approached in fear and trembling. She fell down before Jesus and told Him the whole truth. He said to her, ‘Daughter, your faith has saved you. Go in peace and be cured of your affliction.’” (Mark 5:25, 27-30, 33-34)

Here again the healing miracle is an example of the breaking-in of the Kingdom of God. But what else can be learned from the situation. The healing is caused when the woman draws near to Jesus. The lesson then for us is to answer the question, ‘How can I draw near to Jesus?’ Certainly as we reflect on the miracle, we know that we can spend moments in worship at the Holy Eucharist on Sunday. Especially when we receive Jesus present in Holy Communion we are brought close to Him. But there are other ways as well. Jesus told us, “For where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them.” (Matthew 18:20) So we know that when we gather in the daily life of the Church, be it at worship, or in acts of loving kindness and service to others, we are drawing close to Jesus in that work.

So my brothers and sisters, as we begin our journey through the Ordinary Time season, remember that in and through it we accompany Jesus in His ministry in the Galilee region. We are present there with all of His followers. He speaks to us, not only in words, but in every action during this time. Let’s use this season to contemplate and reflect on the word and actions of Jesus: His parables, His teachings, His healings, His miracles. Let’s be assured that through all of these teachings and actions, the Reign of God is all around us. “Asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, [Jesus] said in reply, ‘The coming of the kingdom of God cannot be observed, and no one will announce, “Look, here it is,” or “There it is.” For behold, the kingdom of God is among you.’” (Luke 17:20-21)



## P.N.C.C. Future Direction

### June 2024

### Prayer for Our Nation

#### Introduction

As we continue in this year of 2024, the Future Direction writings will focus some of our reflections on the various aspects of our Catholic Christianity, especially as it concerns our daily living, life of prayer and liturgical worship. We will reflect on the catechism and various liturgical aspects of the Church, to see how we can enter more deeply into our Catholic faith, strengthen our own spiritual lives and begin to change ourselves as we grow ever closer to Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior.

#### Scripture

Psalms 33:12-12 – The Lord brings the counsel of the nations to nothing; He frustrates the plans of the peoples. The counsel of the Lord stands forever, the thoughts of His heart to all generations. Happy is the nation whose God is the Lord, the people whom He has chosen as His heritage.

Proverbs 14:32-34 – The wicked are overthrown by their evildoing, but the righteous find a refuge in their integrity. Wisdom is at home in the mind of one who has understanding, but it is not known in the heart of fools. Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people.

Matthew 6:9-10 – [Jesus said] pray then in this way: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

John 8:31:36 – Then Jesus said to the Jews who had believed in Him, “If you continue in My word, you are truly My disciples; and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.” They answered Him, “We are descendants of Abraham and have never been slaves to anyone. What do You mean by saying, ‘You will be made free’?” Jesus answered them, “Very truly I tell you, everyone who commits sin is a slave to sin. The slave does not have a permanent place in the household; the son has a place there forever. So, if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed.”

Acts 17:23b – 27 – [Paul stood and said:] What you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you. The God Who made the world and everything in it, He Who is Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in shrines made by human hands, as though He needed anything, since He Himself gives to all mortals life and breath and all things. From one ancestor He made all nations to inhabit the whole earth, and He allotted the times of their existence and the boundaries of the places where they would live, so that they would search for God and perhaps grope for Him and find Him – though indeed He is not far from each one of us.

Romans 13:1 – Let every person be subject to the governing authorities; for there is no authority except from God, and those authorities that exist have been instituted by God. Therefore whoever resists authority resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment. For rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad.

#### Reflection

In this upcoming month of July, our nation will celebrate Independence Day. While on this day we may gather for family celebrations, with cookouts, fireworks shows and time together, we are also called on this day to spend some time in prayer, not only for our nation and the high ideals that it strives to exemplify, but also in remembrance of events within the Polish National Catholic Church that occurred on this day.

Two quite important events in the history of our Church occurred on July 4<sup>th</sup>: the blessing of the cornerstone of St. Stanislaus Cathedral in Scranton, PA in 1897 and then in 1929 the blessing and dedication of the Spójnia Farm property. In both of these events, the leaders of the Polish National Catholic Church sought to proclaim that while giving thanks and having great respect for the high ideals of our nation, freedom and liberty, that we also must approach these ideals together with the responsibility to serve others.

When the Polish National Catholic Church was organized in March of 1897, those who joined with Fr. Francis Hodur did not seek to separate from others, but rather sought to actively worship Almighty God in the freedom that was promised to them in the words of Christ, and the promise of this nation. When no bishop would agree

(Continued on bottom of Page 35.)

## P.N.C.C. — R.C.C. Dialogue Meeting

St. Louis, MO

On May 21st the Polish National Catholic-Roman Catholic Dialogue meeting was hosted by the Archdiocese of St. Louis, MO. After the meeting a wonderful tour of the majestic Cathedral Basilica of St Louis was hosted by Archbishop Mitchell Rozanski. Archbishop then celebrated evening prayer and benediction of the Most Blessed Sacrament.

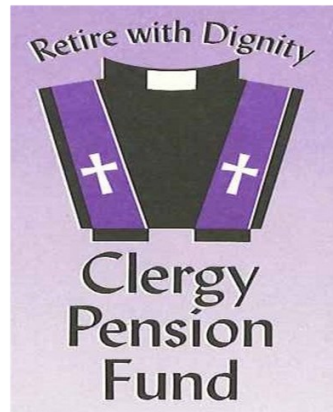
May the Holy Spirit continue to lead and guide us as we labor to realize the prayer of Jesus for the unity of His Church - Ut Unum Sint.



**Front row: Rt. Rev. John Mack, Archbishop Mitchell Rozanski , Most Rev. Anthony Mikovsky  
Middle row: Very Rev. Robert Nemkovich, Rt. Rev. Paul Sobiechowski, Rev. Wojciech Kowal  
Back row: Rev. Michael Pierz, Rev. Jason Soltysiak, Very Rev. Charles Zawistowski**

## Honor Your Father on Fathers Day

### Clergy Pension Fund



Below are the list of names for all those who are honored or remembered as a part of our “Honor Your Father on Father’s Day” campaign for the Clergy Pension Fund of the Polish National Catholic Church. We encourage all to spend a few moments in prayer for those names here as well as to give thank to God for the generosity which continues to support the retired priests of the Church.

In remembrance of father, Walter Sobiechowski, offered by Bishop Paul and Karen Sobiechowski.

In remembrance of father, Stanley Kiska, offered by Bishop Paul and Karen Sobiechowski.

In remembrance of father, Francis J. Golembeski, Sr. offered by Prime Bishop Anthony and Carol Mikovsky.

In remembrance of father, Anthony J. Mikovsky, offered by Prime Bishop Anthony and Carol Mikovsky.

In remembrance of brother, Robert A. Golembeski, offered by Prime Bishop Anthony and Carol Mikovsky.

In honor of husband, Most Rev. Anthony Mikovsky, offered by Carol Mikovsky.

In honor of brother, Francis J. Golembeski, Jr., offered by Carol Mikovsky.

In honor of pastor, Father Dr. Scott J. Lill, offered by Helen Lear.

In remembrance of father, Edward J. Folcik, offered by Marilyn A. Folcik.

In remembrance of grandfather, John T. Knapp, offered by Marilyn A. Folcik.

In remembrance of Rev. Joseph C. Klimczak, offered by Marilyn A. Folcik.

In remembrance of Walter S. Knapp, offered by Marilyn A. Folcik.

In remembrance of father, Leo Sarnowski, offered by Constance Tellep.

In remembrance of husband, Dr. Robert Sarnowski, offered by June K. Sarnowski.

In remembrance of father, Leo Sarnowski, offered by June K. Sarnowski.

In remembrance of father, Stanley Franus, offered by June K. Sarnowski.

In remembrance of father, Michael J. Mietlicki, offered by Michael R. and Mary Gorgol Mietlicki.

In remembrance of father, Dr. John Gorgol, offered by Michael R. and Mary Gorgol Mietlicki.

In remembrance of grandfather, Zygmunt Gorgol, offered by Michael R. and Mary Gorgol Mietlicki.

In remembrance of grandfather, Michael R. Mietlicki, offered by Michael R. and Mary Gorgol Mietlicki.

In remembrance of grandfather, Martin Zygmunt, offered by Michael R. and Mary Gorgol Mietlicki.

In remembrance of grandfather, Steven Senkarik, offered by Michael R. and Mary Gorgol Mietlicki.

In remembrance of father, Joachim Jedynak, offered by Stephanie Marsh.

In remembrance of brother, John Jedynak, offered by Stephanie Marsh.

In remembrance of cousin, Frank Jawor, offered by Stephanie Marsh.

In remembrance of pastor, Rev. Edward Sobolewski, offered by Stephanie Marsh.

In remembrance of father, Thomas Chockley, offered by Larry Chockley.

In remembrance of father, Larry Marsh, offered by Kathy Chockley.

In remembrance of cousin, Philip Lane, offered by Kathy Chockley.

In remembrance of uncle, Arnold Pillar, offered by Larry Chockley.

In remembrance of father, Charles E. Zaranski, offered by Chuck and Cathy Bilinski.

In remembrance of father, Stanley M. Bilinski, offered by Chuck and Cathy Bilinski.

In remembrance of brother, Charles L. Zaranski, offered by Chuck and Cathy Bilinski.

In remembrance of brother, Rt. Rev. Stanley Bilinski, offered by Chuck and Cathy Bilinski.

In honor of pastor, Very Rev. Jarosław Nowak, offered by Chuck and Cathy Bilinski.

In remembrance of father, George Popeck, offered by Natalie Hall.

In remembrance of husband, Harold A. Hall, offered by Natalie Hall.

In remembrance of father, Matthew Pikulski, Sr., offered by Matthew and Linda Pikulski.

In remembrance of father, Vincent Reviello, offered by Matthew and Linda Pikulski.

In remembrance of father, Robert J. Sarnowski, offered by Frank and Jennifer Gerardi.

In remembrance of father, Vito N. Gerardi, offered by Frank and Jennifer Gerardi.

In honor of pastor Rev. Mark Swoger, offered by Carolyn Pacewicz.

In remembrance of father and grandfather, William Miskiavitch, offered by Arlene Miskiavitch Swantek and Melissa Swantek.

In remembrance of husband and father, Most Rev. John Swantek, offered by Arlene Swantek and Melissa Swantek.

In honor of pastor, Very Rev. William Chromey, offered by Holy Trinity Parish, Throop, PA.

In honor of deacon, Deacon Bob Karoscik, offered by Holy Trinity Parish, Throop, PA.

In remembrance of father, Andrew Siedlarczyk, offered by Andrew Siedlarczyk.

In remembrance of grandfather, Maciej Siedlarczyk, offered by Andrew Siedlarczyk.

In remembrance of grandfather, Andrew Kondis, offered by Andrew Siedlarczyk.

In remembrance of bishop, Rt. Rev. Thaddeus Peplowski, offered by Andrew Siedlarczyk.

In honor of godfather, Most Rev. Anthony Mikovsky, offered by Jacob Stankowski.

In remembrance of father, John Wunderlich, offered by Very Rev. Donald E. Wunderlich.

In remembrance of grandfather, John Rulka, offered by Very Rev. Donald E. Wunderlich.

In honor of pastor, Rev. Mark Swoger, offered by Holy Trinity Parish A.N.S. Society, Washington, PA.

In honor of deacon, Deacon David Nichols, offered by Holy Trinity Parish A.N.S. Society, Washington, PA.

In honor of bishop, Rt. Rev. John Mack, offered by Holy Trinity Parish A.N.S. Society, Washington, PA.

In honor of pastor, Rev. Mark Swoger, offered by Kay Howden.

In honor of deacon, Deacon David Nichols, offered by Kay Howden.

In remembrance of father, Frank Klinger, offered by Barbara and Joseph Poloski.

In remembrance of father, Joseph Poloski, Jr., offered by Barbara and Joseph Poloski.

In remembrance of father, Walter Bushko, offered by the Bushko family.

In remembrance of grandfather, John Kuc, offered by his family.

In remembrance of husband, Rt. Rev. Jarosław Rafalko, offered by Leslie Rafalko.

(Continued on Page 8.)

(Honor Your Father on Fathers Day- Continued from Page 7.)

- In remembrance of father, Most Rev. John Swantek, offered by Leslie Doyle.
- In remembrance of father, Paul Kazinetz, Sr., offered by Paul and Rose Kazinetz.
- In remembrance of father, William Krajewski, offered by Paul and Rose Kazinetz.
- In remembrance of brother, Willie (William) Krajewski, offered by Paul and Rose Kazinetz.
- In honor of pastor, Very Rev. Zbigniew Dawid, offered by Paul and Rose Kazinetz.
- In honor of son-in-law, Rev. Jason Soltysiak, offered by Paul and Rose Kazinetz.
- In remembrance of father, William Nichols, offered by Deacon David and Roseanne Nichols and Justin.
- In remembrance of father, Paul Koceski, offered by Deacon David and Roseanne Nichols and Justin
- In remembrance of father, John Wrobel, offered by JoAnn Menzia.
- In remembrance of father, Steven Liska, offered by Bern and Barb Kalteski.
- In remembrance of father, Anthony Kalteski, offered by Bern and Barb Kalteski.
- In remembrance of father, Leonard W. Bring, offered by Lynne and Joseph Dowd II.
- In honor of pastor, Rev. David Rowinski, offered by All Saints Cathedral, Chicago, IL.
- In honor of deacon, Deacon Douglas Scott, offered by All Saints Cathedral, Chicago, IL.
- In honor of Rev. Mariusz Zochowski, offered by All Saints Cathedral, Chicago, IL.
- In remembrance of bishop and pastor, Rt. Rev. Jerry Rafalko, offered by All Saints Cathedral, Chicago, IL.
- In remembrance of father and grandfather, Tony Szymaniak, offered by Adeline B. Kozak and Jerry Gap.
- In remembrance of father, John Kozak offered by Adeline B. Kozak and Jerry Gap.
- In remembrance of father and grandfather, Joseph Motzko, offered by Adeline B. Kozak and Jerry Gap.
- In remembrance of father and grandfather, Joseph Gap, offered by Adeline B. Kozak and Jerry Gap.
- In remembrance of father and grandfather, Most Rev. John Swantek, offered by Lynn and Kevin Pfohl, Nicholas, Elizabeth, Matthew and Olivia.
- In remembrance of father, John Mulka, offered Diane Williams and Donna Schouten.
- In remembrance of father, Andrew Swierkosz, offered by Rudy and Cindy Smolka.
- In remembrance of father, Walter Smolka, offered by Rudy and Cindy Smolka.
- In remembrance of pastor, Very Rev. Joseph Kobylarz, offered by Rudy and Cindy Smolka.
- In remembrance of Very Rev. Francis Kolwicz, offered by Rudy and Cindy Smolka.
- In remembrance of husband, Rev. Joseph Klimczak, offered by Janice Klimczak.
- In remembrance of father, Edward Folcik, offered by Janice Klimczak.
- In remembrance of grandfather, John Knapp, offered by Janice Klimczak.
- In remembrance of all deceased clergy of the P.N.C.C., offered by Janice Klimczak.
- In remembrance of father, Eugene Jablowicz, offered by Gary and Jean Kurzynski.
- In remembrance of grandfather, John Jablowicz, offered by Gary and Jean Kurzynski.
- In remembrance of father, George Kurzynski, offered by Gary and Jean Kurzynski.
- In remembrance of grandfather, Martin Michalczyk, offered by Gary and Jean Kurzynski.
- In remembrance of father, Leonard Cegelka, offered by Richard Cegelka.
- In remembrance of father, Rev. Francis N. Kaczmarczyk, offered by Mr. & Mrs. Francis D. Kaczmarczyk.
- In remembrance of father and grandfather, David J. Petrosky, offered by Deb, Josh and Hannah Bilinski.
- In remembrance of husband and father, Bishop Stanley Bilinski, offered by Deb, Josh and Hannah Bilinski.
- In remembrance of father, John J. Frank, offered by John and Roberta Frank.
- In remembrance of father, William Lobart, offered by Dianne Lobart.



## **Annual Meeting of the Supreme Council of the Polish National Catholic Church Frank Bednash Memorial Library, P.N.C.C. National Church Center , Scranton, PA**

**Submitted by  
Michael R Mietlicki, Secretary of the Supreme Council**

Continued from Volume 102, Issue No. 5—May issue of God's Field

### **Spójnia, Inc.**

The Supreme Council reviewed the report of the Prime Bishop, President of Spójnia, Inc. that included the progress on amended Articles of Incorporation, necessitated by the merger of the PNU with the PNA, the members and meetings of the board, signage, the 90 for 90 Campaign sponsored by the Y.M.S. of R., the Bishop Hodur Retreat and Recreation Center, the fields and barns at Spójnia Farm, pavilion renovations now known as the Great Hall, Ustronie, future planning including a chapel and a capital fund raising campaign, bequests, employees, and a financial report. During the meeting, the Supreme Council also reviewed a list of projects that were completed since 2018 distributed by Paul Gorgol, a Spójnia, Inc. Board Member. In the past Spójnia, Inc., an independent corporation, was a joint venture of the P.N.C.C. and the PNU. They shared in the responsibility of appointing its board members. Since the merger of the PNU with the PNA, that shared responsibility no longer exists. In the future the entire board will be appointed by the Prime Bishop of the P.N.C.C. Based on the Prime Bishop's request, the Supreme Council accepted the responsibility of approving Spójnia, Inc board members in the future. The Articles of Incorporation are being updated to reflect this and other desired changes. These articles need to be approved by the Pennsylvania State Department. This will be the fourth change to the articles. The original articles were done in 1929 with updates in 1956 and 1986. Spójnia, Inc is in a very positive mode currently. There is a lot of excitement about accomplishments and plans. A cross will be installed on the new terrace that was recently created. From the terrace one has a view of the entire campus much like the view Bishop Hodur had when he retreated to the Ustronie. An outdoor altar will be installed there for use until a larger chapel building can be erected. A meditation garden is also planned for the area. Rentals are increasing and range from family celebrations to corporate events. One local high school rents the campus for a sports camp. The Great Hall renovation included centralized heat and air conditioning which will make that facility more attractive for rentals throughout most of the year. The campus provides a beautiful setting for P.N.C parish, and organizational events. While some do use it, it would be great to see more P.N.C. parishes take advantage of the facility. The main goal of the Spójnia Farm Campus is to serve the parishes and members of the P.N.C.C. The renovated Great Hall and the new cross on the terrace will be blessed during the mass celebrated at the campus on July 4<sup>th</sup>. Mass has been celebrated there every July 4<sup>th</sup> since 1929. The Supreme Council unanimously accepted the Report on Spójnia, Inc.

### **National Church Center**

Prime Bishop distributed the report of the Building Manager, John Andrzejewski. The council reviewed the report that included an analysis of building income and expenses. It was noted Mr. Andrzejewski is at the NCC just about every day and handles all lease renewals, building systems and issues that arise. The space that the PNU occupied was shared with the Spójnia Credit Union. Once it is determined how much space the credit union needs, construction will begin to reconfigure the space for lease. A current tenant has expressed interest in leasing space. There are exterior repairs planned for the building including repointing bricks and recoating the roof. The Supreme Council unanimously approved the Report of the NCC Building Manager.

### **P.N.C.C. Website**

The Supreme Council reviewed the prepared report submitted by Fred Aebli, Chairman, that included P.N.C.C. Website and Facebook analytics. The Prime Bishop reported that Fred Aebli indicated that since the P.N.C.C. Website gets enough traffic it could be monetized if desired. In the coming weeks, the P.N.C.C. Constitution that was amended at the last synod will be placed on the website. Because the P.N.C.C. Constitution will be available online, very few copies will be printed. During the discussion, the following comments were offered. Most parishes of the P.N.C.C. have either a website or a Facebook page. The Church needs to decide if it wants a uniformed look. Diversity in format has its advantages but content should be consistent. The Eastern Diocese is focusing on the online presence of its parishes and has hired a digital media manager to analyze parish websites and social media and make recommendations to the upcoming diocesan synod and

(Continued on Page 10.)

(Annual Meeting of the Supreme Council of the P.N.C.C. (Minutes) - Continued from Page 9.)

assist parishes with their social media presence. The Eastern Diocese offered to share its findings with the Supreme Council. It was noted that the parish in Latham, NY has a great website. The basis for it was a study performed by external consultants that provided an outside point of view of what the parish was trying to market. Funding for this came from the Central Diocese's Enlivening Church Growth program. This type of consulting can benefit other aspects of the P.N.C.C. as well. Social media tools are not a platform to share large amounts of information. Websites still work best for this. Social media tools are good for alerting an audience to an event or introducing information and should draw the attention back to a website for more detailed information. The Supreme Council unanimously accepted the Church Website Report.

### **The Residence of the Prime Bishop**

The Supreme Council unanimously approved the following repairs to the residence.

- \* The roof and rain gutters need to be examined and possibly replaced. There is a lot of moss growing on the roof of the house. The roof could be 30 years old.
- \* The concrete under the shed in the car port needs to be repaired.
- \* The replacement of the front steps.

### **Medical Bridge to Poland Grant Request**

The Supreme Council unanimously approved a request for a Medical Bridge to Poland grant from a small urgent care facility near Katowice Poland. The request was for \$30K for medical equipment. The approval is contingent upon further research to validate the request since the request was received just prior to the meeting of the Supreme Council.

### **Education Stipends and Scholarships**

As a result of an action item from the 2023 Supreme Council Meeting, Cathy Bilinski submitted a proposed application and process for the Arthur W Zabierek Scholarship. Likewise, since the PNU merger with the PNA, the P.N.C.C. assumed responsibility for its Education Stipend Program as well as initial funding for a future Ernest Gazda, Jr. Scholarship. The Supreme Council reviewed these scholarships and a structure to support these and other scholarships going forward.

#### **Arthur W Zabierek Scholarship**

Currently there is over \$400K available to support this scholarship. There will be three \$5K scholarships initially. Information regarding this scholarship will be published in the next issue of *God's Field* and will be sent to each pastor. A June 15 deadline was set with an announcement of awards taking place by August 1.

#### **Education Stipends of the PNU**

The P.N.C.C. received \$80K from the PNU to support this program. Stipends of \$200 will be available to any member of the P.N.C.C. who qualifies. An application form is in the process of being created.

#### **Ernest Gazda, Jr. Scholarship**

The PNU was in the process of formulating this scholarship at the time of its merger. An initial amount of \$10K was provided by the Gazda family to establish this scholarship with more promised after his estate is settled.

#### **Bishop Jarosław Rafalko Scholarship**

With the passing of Bishop Rafalko, local Chicago efforts are underway by the Western Diocese and All Saints Cathedral to fund a scholarship in his name. The scholarship is spearheaded by Leslie Rafalko, wife of Bishop Rafalko. The goal is to raise \$50K. Since the scholarship is still in its formation stage, its future administration is not decided but those who wish to contribute to this scholarship can do so by sending contributions to:

Bishop Jarosław Rafalko Scholarship  
All Saints Cathedral  
9201 W. Higgins Road  
Chicago, IL 60631

## **Commission to Administer P.N.C.C. Scholarships**

While Cathy Bilinski will offer administration support initially, a commission led by Deb Bilinski, and consisting of Lori Scott and Mary Stankowski will administer all scholarships available through the P.N.C.C. going forward. It is anticipated this will become a commission of the P.N.C.C. where members are appointed at general synods.

## **The Report of the Prime Bishop**

The Supreme Council reviewed the written Report of the Prime Bishop that included his thanks to his wife, Carol, for her support and dedication, his official calendar, his daily spiritual and administrative activities, ordinations, his ecumenical activities, a thank you to his staff for their work, the National Church Center, Future Direction, the passing of clergy, parish visits, the Polish Catholic Church in Poland, Savonarola Theological Seminary, financial matters, regular meetings with the Bishops, Church Commissions, National Organizations, Dialogue with other religious denominations, Union of Scranton, the PNU, Spójnia Credit Union and its sponsorship, immigration challenges, Spójnia, Inc, and bequests to the P.N.C.C. and its entities. Prime Bishop requested Supreme Council members keep in their prayers those who remembered the Church and its affiliates through estates during the past year, namely the estates and trusts of Father Senior Fryderyk Banas, Thaddeus Koziol, and Henry Piecuch. The Supreme Council unanimously approved the Report of the Prime Bishop with its gratitude for his work and dedication.

## **Report of Diocesan Bishops and Administrators**

### **The Report of the Bishop of the Buffalo Pittsburgh Diocese**

The Supreme Council reviewed the written Report of the Bishop of the Buffalo Pittsburgh Diocese, Bishop John Mack, that included diocesan statistics, diocesan structure, organizations, vocations, the status of diocesan parishes, the diocesan synod, the National Youth Convocation, and recognition to the clergy and laity of the diocese for their work. In summarizing his report Bishop Mack summarized the status of Divine Mercy Parish in Las Vegas, highlighting the excellent leadership Father Erick Heredia-Flores is providing the parish. He also acknowledged the excellent work the parish committee is doing. The parish has been in litigation with Adam Kotas. They most recently had a hearing/deposition in February 2024 in which the parish was determined to have rights to a portion of the building they occupy. This will necessitate the building being sold. The parish is to receive 1.2 million dollars and 30% of anything above that figure if realized in the sale. They are in the process of looking for a new location. Parish attendance on weekend masses averages between 150 and 200 people across 3 Spanish masses and 1 English. Father Erick has baptisms, weddings, quinceañera celebrations almost every weekend. Bishop also reported Adam Kotas was involuntarily laicized by the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Las Vegas. The Buffalo Pittsburgh Diocese is excited about hosting the 2024 National Youth Convocation. Plans for hosting this year's Convo have been in progress since January. The theme of the Convo is "Running the Race." It will be July 22-26, 2024 at Mercyhurst University in Erie, PA.

### **The Report of the Bishop of the Canadian Diocese**

The Supreme Council reviewed the written Report of the Bishop of the Canadian Diocese, Prime Bishop Anthony Mikovsky, that included clergy and parish concerns, especially the shortage of priests in the diocese, the status of property, legal requirements and care of the diocese going forward. Summarizing his report, the Prime Bishop noted Father Robert Kay, pastor in Winnipeg and Brandon died in a tragic accident. His death has left both parishes and two missions in the western portion of the Canadian Diocese without a priest. Prime Bishop has not been able to find a priest to service the parishes even on a temporary basis. Winnipeg is the largest parish in the Canadian Diocese with about 200 active members. The Prime Bishop is heartbroken over this situation. The closest United States parish to Winnipeg is about 9 hours away traveling by car. The parish conducts weekly lay led worship using *Worship in the Absence of a Priest or Deacon* that was put together by the National Liturgical Commission. During the worship they view the Prime Bishop's weekly homily. Because of the Vocations Crisis in the P.N.C.C., this scene may play out in other parishes in the future.

### **The Report of the Bishop of the Central Diocese**

The Supreme Council reviewed the report of Bishop Bernard Nowicki regarding the Central Diocese that focused on his activities managing a Diocese and Cathedral, the Enlivening Church Growth Program, an explanation of a tribunal case within the diocese, parish statuses, democracy within the P.N.C.C., and the Di-

(Continued on Page 12.)

(Annual Meeting of the Supreme Council of the P.N.C.C. (Minutes) - Continued from Page 11.)

ocesan Music Commission. In summarizing his report, Bishop Nowicki spoke to the age and health of the clergy of the diocese. In some cases, plans have been designed to assist these priests celebrate mass. Innovative organizational arrangements will need to be considered as the impact of the Vocation crisis touches more and more parishes of the Central Diocese. He reviewed the status of the Wilkes-Barre, PA parish and the tribunal case that occurred in the diocese and highlighted his paper on democracy in the P.N.C.C. titled *Ecclesial Democracy: A Primer*.

### **The Report of the Bishop of the Eastern Diocese**

The Supreme Council reviewed the report of Bishop Paul Sobiechowski regarding the Eastern Diocese. The report included a financial status of the diocese, ordinations, the work of the various diocesan commissions, organizations, parish grants, strategic planning, its upcoming synod, the use of Zoom within the diocese, scouting, diocesan archives, synod resolutions, and his calendar. Bishop Sobiechowski was available for questions.

### **The Report of the Administrator of the Western Diocese**

The Supreme Council reviewed the report of Father Senior Charles Zawistowski, Administrator of the Western Diocese, that described his work as administrator since the untimely death of Bishop Rafalko. His report covered the death of Bishop Rafalko, parish issues and needs, communication with Administrative Seniors, youth gatherings, commissions, vocations, organizations, meetings, and his calendar. In summarizing his report, Father Senior Zawistowski indicated his goal as diocesan administrator is to provide confidence to the diocese that it will get through this difficult time. He thanked the Prime Bishop and Diocesan Bishops for their support. Last year, based on membership numbers, the Western Diocese was the smallest diocese. This year it is the second largest. The Western Diocese was also the best contributor to the 6% Fund and the Clergy Pension Plan. He is raising the expectations within the diocese. He is pushing the parishes and organizations of the diocese to do what they are supposed to do and that includes meeting their financial obligations to the diocese and National Church. Father Senior is thankful for the cooperation he is receiving from the clergy and laity of the diocese. Prime Bishop thanked Father Senior Zawistowski for taking on the responsibility of administering the diocese and thanked him for doing an excellent job.

The Supreme Council unanimously accepted the Reports of the Diocesan Bishops and Administrators.

## **Commission Reports**

### **History & Archives Commission Report**

The Supreme Council reviewed the report submitted by Rev. James Ploskonka PhD, Chairman, that contained a tribute to the late Joseph Seliga, past chairman, its activities, and the Scholar's Conference. In summarizing the report Prime Bishop Mikovsky noted Dr. Joseph W. Wiczerzak, a past member of the commission, also passed away this past year. Submissions to the archives are stacking up since the death of Joseph Seliga, who spent one week each month at the Archives categorizing submissions. The P.N.C.C. Studies are being published once again. The Commission conducted a Scholar's Conference on April 18-19, 2024. During discussion it was noted there are searchable copies of *God's Field*. These are shared with researchers.

### **National Commission on Liturgy Report**

The Supreme Council reviewed the prepared report submitted by Very Rev. Robert M. Nemkovich, Jr., Chairman, that included descriptions of the commission's activities and programs including a statement on the matter of the Holy Eucharist, the P.N.C.C. Solemnity of the Word of God, Revised Lectionary for P.N.C.C. Solemnities, Marian and Votive Masses, additional prefaces, The Rubrics Celebration of Holy Mass for Deacons, para-liturgical services and much more. When he summarized his report, Father Senior Nemkovich noted forty-three documents were distributed to the clergy at the end of last year. The Solemnity of the Word of God was established by the Bishops of the P.N.C.C. It will be celebrated every year on the Sunday after the Sunday that is within the Octave of Corpus Christi and will highlight the importance of God's Word in the P.N.C.C. A statement on the matter of the Holy Eucharist was also published, addressing requests for gluten free hosts which are not bread. While gluten free hosts cannot be used, there are low gluten hosts that can be used. Efforts are underway to translate the various liturgies into Spanish and Polish. Father Antulio Alvarado is overseeing the Spanish translations while Father Dr. Henryk Wos, is doing the Polish translations. Father Senior concluded his summation by thanking the Prime Bishop, the Diocesan Bishops and commission members for their work and support.

To be continued in Volume 102, Issue No. 7 — July issue of God's Field.

## Annual Celebration at Spójnia Farm

July 4, 2024

We invite all to join us at Spójnia Farm and the Bishop Hodur Retreat and Recreation Center for a day of worship, fellowship and enjoyment on July 4, 2024.

On July 4, 2024, we honor the 95th anniversary of the blessing and dedication of the Spójnia Farm property by Bishop Francis Hodur on July 4, 1929. Holy Mass will be celebrated by Prime Bishop Anthony Mikovsky at 11:00 a.m. followed by the blessing and dedication of the major renovation of the Great Hall/Pavilion. Members of the Spójnia, Inc. Board of Directors will be on hand to show all the wonderful updates for Spójnia Farm as well as our plans for years to come.

During the afternoon, the United Y.M.S of R will host a “Family Day Celebration” with prizes, games, activities and, of course, delicious food – Homemade potato pancakes, gołąbki, kluski, pierogi, kielbasa with sauerkraut and other picnic foods.

This day is also the opening of the United Y.M.S. of R. Kurs Encampment, so you will have the opportunity to visit and spend time with many youth from around the P.N.C.C. as you experience the beautiful Spójnia Farm environment.



Bishop Francis Hodur speaks to the assembled crowd during the dedication of Spójnia Farm in Waymart, PA on July 4, 1929.



## Spójnia Farm Experiences

### Prime Bishop Anthony Mikovsky, Spójnia, Inc. President

During my life I have had a number of experiences at Spójnia Farm. It began when I was young. During one year when I was young I came to visit Spójnia Farm with my parents and then stayed for the Kurs encampment there. In those days we stayed in the old barracks and thinking back to that time the accommodations were not all that comfortable. But none of that mattered to a young child. It was a chance to be away and enjoy the outdoors. At the time 'the Farm' seemed to be incredibly large and we all had a tremendous amount of fun for the week. It certainly was a highlight of the summer to be able to spend that week at Spójnia Farm.

After this time, I became involved in summer sports in New Jersey and played in a band. My priorities changed. Then I was off to college and graduate school and had little time for any time away. It was not until I returned to Scranton and the Savonarola Theological Seminary in preparation for the priesthood that I was reintroduced to Spójnia Farm.

During my time away much changed at Spójnia Farm. The Bishop Hodur Retreat and Recreation Center was built in 1990 and the facility was beautiful. It was a far cry from the old barracks that we stayed in earlier.

My reintroduction began early on during Seminary. In the Spring of the first year, we received the Minor Orders, so then during Lent and the month of May we, as seminary students, would travel to Spójnia Farm to celebrate Stations of the Cross or May Devotions for the residents at the Manor at Waymart. We not only celebrated the service, but we also spent time together with the residents and usually visited the Retreat Center to see who was there. These were all wonderful and educational experiences as I was preparing for ministry within the Church.

During the summer while I was in the seminary, I also had the opportunity to go up to Spójnia Farm to spend a bit of time in the pool and enjoy the surroundings. While I didn't quite think that the Farm was as expansive as I did as a child, it was still a large and beautiful place that I didn't think that enough Polish National Catholics knew about or appreciated.

After I was ordained and assigned to St. Stanislaus Cathedral in Scranton, Prime Bishop Swantek spoke to me about serving as the chaplain for the Kurs encampment during the summer. I jumped at the opportunity. It was a great ministry experience as well as a wonderful time in the summer. I had to select a spiritual theme and then plan a week of Masses and devotions as well as schedule lectures to match the theme. Along with all this, I had the opportunity to be a spiritual guide to the young members participating in the Kurs as well as to the counselors. All in all, it was a truly wonderful and spiritual time. After being elected as bishop and appointed to the Central Diocese, I still had the opportunity to celebrate Mass during the Kurs and give a lecture to the campers.

It is finally now as Prime Bishop that I serve as President of the Spójnia, Inc. Board of Directors. This was a new experience as I began to see all of the work that goes into the upkeep and maintenance of the entire Spójnia Farm property and all of its buildings. While this is certainly a challenging endeavor, it makes me appreciate the love and devotion that many members of the Church have given to make sure that Spójnia Farm continues to be a great place for the members of the Church. In this capacity as well, I have had the wonderful opportunity to celebrate Holy Mass for July 4<sup>th</sup>, much as Bishop Hodur did back in 1929 and in the following years.

Through all of this I have much appreciation for those who have sustained Spójnia Farm and its various operations throughout the years. So many have given of their time, talent and treasure to make sure that the Polish National Catholic Church continues to have this wonderful place where the members of the Church can commune with God and nature, as well as make memories in moments of worship and fellowship.

Please join us this July 4<sup>th</sup>, if not in person at least in prayer, to give your support to all of the good work that takes place at the Spójnia Farm Campus.



## Parenting as a Divine Responsibility

Rev. Dr. Stan Jasiurkowski

### Introduction

Parenting is a multifaceted and deeply significant aspect of humans that involves how adults nurture, educate, and socialize children from infancy through adulthood. Being a parent is a joyful privilege, but the role of a parent encompasses a wide range of responsibilities, from providing basic physical needs to developing a child's values, beliefs, and behaviors. The importance of parenting cannot be overstated, as it profoundly influences the psychological, emotional, spiritual, and social development of the next generation (Bornstein, 2015).

In this article, I would like to explore the complex relationship between parenting and spirituality, particularly within the context of pastoral counseling. I aim to give our pastors insights into how parenting as a divine responsibility can shape the guidance, they offer to parents in their parishes seeking support. The scope of the article will include theoretical frameworks, practical strategies for counseling, and considerations for addressing diverse family dynamics within a spiritual context. By examining these topics, we can better appreciate the different parenting practices and the universal importance of raising children well.

### The Foundations of Divine Responsibility in Parenting

In many religious and spiritual traditions, including our P.N.C.C. theological tradition, parenting is viewed as a divine responsibility, a sacred duty entrusted to adults by God. This perspective underscores the moral and ethical dimensions of parenting, suggesting that how we raise our child is not only a personal or societal concern but also a matter of fulfilling a spiritual mandate given by God, our Creator, and Redeemer (Dollahite & Thatcher, 2008). Such a view elevates the everyday acts of caring for and guiding children to a level of spiritual service, instilling the parental role with deeper purpose and meaning. Cross-cultural beliefs have long associated bringing up children with a sacred duty, a stewardship entrusted to parents by God. In our P.N.C.C. tradition, we hold a profound theological perspective regarding the role of parents. This belief is rooted in both Scripture and tradition, and it is further reinforced by the sacrament of Holy Matrimony in which couples receive grace to fulfill their marital duties. This perspective is evident in the reverence for parental roles and the honor attributed to raising their children.

Parenting encompasses the nurturing of the whole child, including his or her spiritual and moral dimensions. In Genesis 1:26-27, we encounter the profound truth that humans are made in the image of God. This divine imprint shapes our identity and purpose. As parents, we mirror God's creativity, compassion, and relational capacity. Our role extends beyond mere biology; it becomes a sacred stewardship. Psalm 103:13 beautifully captures God's tender care for His children: "As a father shows compassion to his children, so the Lord shows compassion to those who fear him." Our parenting must mirror this divine love—a love that corrects, guides, and forgives. Psalm 127:3 reminds us, "Behold, children are a heritage from the Lord, the fruit of the womb a reward." We are entrusted with these precious gifts. Like faithful stewards, we nurture their physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being. Our role as parents is not ownership but custodianship.

Adam and Eve, our Biblical ancestors, faced both triumphs and failures. Their obedience and subsequent rebellion teach us about choices, consequences, and the need for open communication with God and each other. As parents, we learn from their experiences—their joys and their sorrows. Abraham and Sarah's faith journey exemplifies firm trust in God's promises. Despite their doubts and challenges, they adhered to hope. Parenting, too, requires faith—faith in God's faithfulness even when circumstances seem daunting. Their story encourages us to trust beyond what we see. Let us imagine also Mary and Joseph who were the earthly parents chosen to raise the Savior of the world, Jesus Christ. Their obedience, humility, and reverence set an example for us. They navigated the extraordinary with grace, and we can draw inspiration from their commitment to God's plan.

### Ethical and Moral Implications

Parents must focus on the role of values and virtues in raising children as it is a critical aspect of the ethical and moral implications of divine responsibility in parenting. This responsibility suggests that parents are tasked not only with caring for the physical well-being of their children but also with developing their conscience which is a moral compass that guides them throughout their lives (Garcia, 2014). The virtues of hones-

(Continued on Page 16.)

(Parenting as a Divine Responsibility- Continued from Page 15.)

ty, integrity, compassion, and respect for others are often highlighted as central to a child's upbringing. By passing on these values, parents contribute to the development of socially responsible and ethically-minded individuals.

Moreover, the responsibility toward children's moral and spiritual development is seen as a fundamental aspect of divine responsibility in parenting. This entails guiding children to understand the difference between right and wrong, fostering an environment where spiritual growth is encouraged, and helping children to develop a sense of purpose and meaning in life. It is widely believed that such moral and spiritual upbringing contributes to the overall well-being of children and prepares them to face life's challenges with resilience and character. Additionally, we need to raise our children in the P.N.C.C. tradition and instill in them the love for our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, and the love for the Church and her teaching and practices. This includes, attending Sunday Mass, participating in the Sacraments, as Holy Communion, Penance, preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation, and other practices deemed as the obligation by the Church. As we can see, this concept has far-reaching implications for the ethical and moral responsibilities that parents hold in shaping the character and destiny of their offspring.

### **The Roles and Responsibilities of Parents**

Parents' primary roles and responsibilities encompass a broad spectrum of nurturing and care, which are foundational to the healthy development of children. At the heart of these parental duties is the provision of a stable and loving environment, which research has consistently shown to be critical for a child's emotional security and attachment (Bowlby, 1988). Such an environment is the cornerstone for all other aspects of parenting, offering children a sense of safety and belonging that is necessary for their growth and well-being.

Parents are also tasked with meeting the physical, emotional, spiritual, and psychological needs of their children. This includes not only the necessities of life, such as food, shelter, and healthcare but also the more complex and higher-level needs of emotional support, attention, love, guidance, and self-actualization. The psychological needs of children involve fostering their self-esteem, competence, autonomy, and interdependence, which are essential for their development into healthy, functional adults (Maslow, 1943; Ryan & Deci, 2000). The spiritual needs of children encompass their inherent curiosity, wonder, and search for meaning, whether expressed through faith-based practices or universal awe.

While schools and educational institutions play a significant role in the cognitive and social development of children, they cannot relieve or substitute parents in their responsibility for spiritual, moral, and patriotic development. The formation of a child's character, values, and identity is deeply influenced by the family environment and the intentional actions of parents (Lickona, 1992). It is within the family that children first learn about God, trust, justice, empathy, responsibility, and the Church, and form their conscience. Additionally, parents are uniquely positioned to instill in their children a sense of spirituality and faith that may align with their own religious beliefs and practices, something that is beyond the purview of secular schooling or even against their current progressive agenda and, in some instances, brainwashing.

Furthermore, the cultivation of patriotism and love for our country and community is intimately tied to the values and narratives shared within the family. It is the parents who often serve as a child's first role models in demonstrating civic engagement, national pride, and respect for our flag and National Anthem (Flanagan & Tucker, 1999). Let me share with you a practical experience about a patriotic upbringing. As an instructor of Transformational Moral Leadership, I encountered a sobering reality while teaching our deploying teams bound for Africa. I posed a straightforward question: "How many of you have read our Constitution?" The response was disheartening. Out of two teams—comprising 24 seasoned and battle-tested noncommissioned officers and officers—only an average of three hands would rise. My subsequent statement carried weight: "You raised your right hand and solemnly swore to protect and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic. Yet, do you truly comprehend its contents?" The room fell into a silence, so profound that one could hear a pin drop. This touching moment underscores a broader concern: Our public schools are falling short in nurturing the spirit of patriotism, imparting deep knowledge of our authentic history, and fostering an understanding of civics. As parents, we bear a sacred obligation to fill this void and nurture it through parental influence and example.

In addition to nurturing and care, parents have a pivotal role in the education and guidance of their children. This role extends beyond the walls of formal schooling and into the realm of early education and lifelong



learning. From the earliest stages of a child's life, parents are their first teachers, imparting knowledge through everyday interactions and experiences. They lay the foundation for skills such as language, problem-solving, social interaction, instilling faith, and connecting with God, and the Church community (Ramey & Ramey, 1998). As children grow, parents continue to influence their attitudes toward learning, often fostering curiosity and a love for knowledge that persists throughout their lives.

Furthermore, parents are instrumental in instilling discipline, work ethic, and a sense of responsibility in their children. Through setting expectations and consistent routines, parents teach children the value of hard work and perseverance (Grolnick & Slowiaczek, 1994). Discipline, when approached in a positive and supportive manner, helps children develop self-control, self-esteem, and the ability to delay gratification, which are crucial skills for success in various life domains. By encouraging children to take ownership of their actions and to understand the consequences of their behavior, parents promote a strong sense of responsibility.

As parents fulfill their roles in care, education, and guidance, they also serve as role models and mentors. Children are astute observers, and they habitually emulate the behaviors, attitudes, and values of their parents (Bandura, 1977). I cannot stress enough that parental behavior has a significant impact on child development. When parents demonstrate positive behaviors such as kindness, integrity, and diligence, they set a standard for their children to follow. In contrast, negative behaviors exhibited by parents also influence children, most likely leading to the adoption of similar negative patterns in their behavior.

The mentorship aspect of parenting involves providing advice, sharing experiences, and guiding children through complex life situations. As mentors, parents help children navigate social interactions, academic challenges, and eventually, career choices. This supportive relationship can greatly affect a child's self-efficacy and confidence, as parents who believe in their children's capabilities encourage them to set and pursue ambitious goals (Schunk & Pajares, 2002). Parents, just keep in mind that you are not your children's peers or friends, but you have the authority that you exercise with love, and your authority has to be respected.

In the context of counseling, let us consider a vignette that illustrates the challenges and strategies related to parenting and the establishment of conditions for behavior change. Jason, a 16-year-old teenager from a military family, has been increasingly refusing to contribute to household responsibilities. His room remained untidy, and he expressed no interest in any form of familial responsibility. Despite this, Jason consistently expressed that he is entitled to have the latest stylish clothes and top-of-the-line electronics. His behavior has created tension at home, and his parents were seeking guidance on how to address the situation.

During the counseling session, I realized that Jason's parents were struggling with setting and enforcing appropriate boundaries and consequences. They have provided for his needs and wants in an attempt to compensate for the frequent relocations and absences due to military service, which they feel may have disrupted Jason's sense of stability. I encouraged parents to bring also Jason for the following counseling sessions. I worked with the family to emphasize the importance of implementing conditions and a framework where Jason understands that his demands are not entitlements but privileges and they come with responsibilities. This approach was grounded in the principle that parental guidance includes teaching children the relationship between actions and outcomes, a cornerstone of moral and character development.

I encouraged them to have an open and honest conversation with him about the family's values, including the importance of everyone's contribution and gratitude. We also discussed the impact of Jason's behavior on the family dynamics and his parents expressed their expectations clearly. After that, I helped them to establish a structured system where Jason's privileges, such as buying stylish clothing or electronics, are directly linked to his participation in certain family duties. This system was designed to be fair and consistent, with clear consequences for non-compliance. For instance, Jason would need to keep his room clean, perform designated chores, help his siblings, and participate actively in family gatherings, i.e., family dinner (no electronics at the family table) to maintain his access to the electronics he enjoys.

Throughout this process, I underscored the need for Jason's parents to model the behavior they wish to see in their son and other children. Their behavior had to be congruent with their expectations of their children. They must demonstrate discipline, work ethic, and responsibility in their actions. Additionally, I encouraged them to recognize Jason's positive behaviors, reinforcing the link between his contributions to the family and the privileges he enjoys.

(Continued on Page 18.)

(Parenting as a Divine Responsibility- Continued from Page 17.)

By bringing Jason to the counseling table, and working on developing these conditions, we were not only addressing the immediate behavioral issues but also instilling in him a greater understanding of responsibility, reciprocity, and respect for the needs of the family. Through guidance, consistency, and the establishment the clear expectations, the parents were helping him develop the self-discipline and values that will serve him well in adulthood.

## Conclusion

Parenting with divine responsibility involves approaching the role of a parent as a sacred duty bestowed upon individuals to nurture, guide, and support the growth and development of their children lovingly and spiritually. Parents are encouraged to embrace parenting and recognize the profound impact they have on shaping the lives of their children and contributing to the well-being of society as a whole. Parents need to commit to ongoing reflection and improvement in their parenting practices, continuously striving to embody the values of love, compassion, and integrity in their interactions with their children. Parenting with divine responsibility leaves a lasting legacy that extends beyond the immediate family, shaping the future of society through the values and virtues instilled in the next generation.

## References

- Bandura, A. (1977). *Social learning theory*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Bornstein, M. H. (Ed.). (2015). *Handbook of parenting: Volume 1: Children and parenting* (3rd ed.). Routledge.
- Bowlby, J. (1988). *A Secure Base: Parent-Child Attachment and Healthy Human Development*. Basic Books.
- Dollahite, D. C., & Thatcher, J. Y. (2008). Talking about religion: How religious youth and parents discuss their faith. *Journal of Adolescent Research*, 23(5), 611-641. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0743558408322141>
- Flanagan, C. A., & Tucker, C. J. (1999). Adolescents' explanations for political issues: Concordance with their views of self and society. *Developmental Psychology*, 35(5), 1198-1209. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0012-1649.35.5.1198>
- Garcia, J. E. (2014). The Importance of Being Ethical: Parental Modeling of Moral and Social Values. In A. Ben-Arieh, F. Casas, I. Frønes, & J. E. Korbin (Eds.), *Handbook of Child Well-Being: Theories, Methods, and Policies in Global Perspective* (pp. 2357-2379). Springer.
- Grolnick, W. S., & Slowiaczek, M. L. (1994). Parents' involvement in children's schooling: A multidimensional conceptualization and motivational model. *Child Development*, 65(1), 237-252. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1131378>
- Lickona, T. (1992). *Educating for Character: How Our Schools Can Teach Respect and Responsibility*. Bantam Books.
- Maslow, A. H. (1943). A theory of human motivation. *Psychological Review*, 50(4), 370-396. <https://doi.org/10.1037/h0054346>
- Ramey, C. T., & Ramey, S. L. (1998). Early intervention and early experience. *American Psychologist*, 53(2), 109-120. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.53.2.109>
- Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2000). Self-determination theory and the facilitation of intrinsic motivation, social development, and well-being. *American Psychologist*, 55(1), 68-78. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.55.1.68>
- Schunk, D. H., & Pajares, F. (2002). The development of academic self-efficacy. In A. Wigfield & J. S. Eccles (Eds.), *Development of achievement motivation* (pp. 15-31). Academic Press. <https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-012750053-9/50003-6>.



# JOIN US FOR OUR 10TH ANNUAL YMS OF R GOLF TOURNAMENT!

SATURDAY, AUGUST 24, 2024



KIS 'N GREENS GOLF COURSE  
13822 NORTH ROAD, ALDEN, NY 14004

Our Buffalo, NY branch of the Young Men's Society of the Resurrection (YMS of R), Branch 20, will be hosting our 10th Annual Golf Outing on Saturday, August 24! Come join the fun playing a scramble golf format, rain or shine, to benefit the United YMS of R Youth Fund. Not a golfer? You can still attend the fabulous awards dinner at Holy Mother of the Rosary Cathedral (6298 Broadway, Lancaster).

We will have three divisions: **YMS of R Division**, where all members of the foursome are YMS of R members; **Open Division**, with nonmembers of the YMS of R in any combination of men and women; and **Open Women's Division**, where all four team members are women. All Seniors and women will hit from the appropriate tee box.

Contact branch chairman Bob Giczkowski at 716-359-6645 or Dave Pecynski at 716-668-6838 for more information. We hope to see you there!

## 10<sup>th</sup> Annual YMS of R Golf Tournament

### Registration and Check-In

Entry fee is \$125.00 per person for golfing (\$500.00 per foursome), and each foursome will get 18 holes of golf and a cart, lunch during play, door prizes, and dinner. If you wish only to attend the dinner, the cost is \$25.00.

Check-in will be on Saturday at 8:00 a.m., with coffee and donuts provided, rain or shine. Shotgun start is at 9:00 a.m.

### Hotel Reservations

We have a block of rooms reserved at Holiday Inn Express & Suites at 131 Buell Ave., across from Buffalo Airport in Cheektowaga, NY at \$159 per night. Call Brenda Sikorski at 716-631-8700 and use the code **HMG** when making your reservation. Hotel reservations must be made by July 21, 2024.

On Friday night at 6:00 p.m. we will have a hospitality room in the same hotel for fellowship, food, drink and testing your putting skills. On Sunday, please join us at 9:00 a.m. for Holy Mass at the Cathedral, with a breakfast to follow in our parish hall.

### Hole Sponsorships

If you would like to sponsor a hole, a laminated sign 24"x18" will be displayed at the golf course. Cost of the sign is \$100.00. Please let us know **EXACTLY** what you want to appear on your sign, and send a separate check for your sign, payable to YMS of R Branch 20.

If you have a previous hole sponsorship sign from last year's tournament, please make us aware.

**Deadline for all registrations, reservations and sponsorships is July 21, 2024. Please address all golf mailings to 6298 Broadway, Lancaster NY 14086, Attn: Golf Committee.**

## Schedule of Events

### Friday, August 23, 2024

6:00 p.m. – 11:00 p.m. – Hospitality Night at the Holiday Inn Express & Suites, 131 Buell Ave., Cheektowaga, NY 14225.

### Saturday, August 24, 2024

**Kis N Greens Golf Course, 13822 North Rd., Alden, NY 14004**

8:00 a.m. – Check-In / Registration

9:00 a.m. – Prayer & Tee-Off with Shotgun start. Lunch at the golf course.

**Holy Mother of the Rosary Cathedral, 6298 Broadway, Lancaster, NY 14086**

6:00 p.m. – Social Hour

6:30 p.m. – Awards Dinner

### Sunday, August 25, 2024

**Holy Mother of the Rosary Cathedral, 6298 Broadway, Lancaster, NY 14086**

9:00 a.m. – Holy Mass

Breakfast following

## Golf Tournament Registration

### Player 1

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

### Player 2

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

### Player 3

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

### Player 4

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Check one of the following divisions:

- YMS of R Division: All four team members are members of a local YMS of R. Branch Numbers or Parish: \_\_\_\_\_
- Open Division: Non YMS of R members, any combination of men and women.
- Open Women's Division: All four team members are women.

**Mail in registration due by July 21, 2024. Make all checks payable to YMS of R Branch 20. Fill out and return this form with checks to Holy Mother of the Rosary Cathedral, YMS of R Golf Tournament, 6298 Broadway, Lancaster, NY 14086.**

## Central Diocese

### Scranton Seniorate, Central Diocese Corpus Christi Holy Mother of Sorrows Parish, Dupont, PA

The Annual Scranton Seniorate Corpus Christi celebration was held at Holy Mother of Sorrows Parish in Dupont, PA, on Thursday, May 30, 2024. Prime Bishop Anthony Mikovsky participated and read the gospels. Bp. Bernard Nowicki was the celebrant and homilist. Very Rev. Zbigniew Dawid prepared and assisted in the liturgy. Fr. Sr. Chromey was in attendance.

We would like to thank the host parish and ANS for their hospitality. Special thanks to Paul Kaspriskie, Lois McHugh and Debbie Fritz for setting and decorating the outdoor altars for the procession.

Submitted by Very Rev. Zbigniew Dawid



## May at Holy Mother of Sorrows Parish

### Dupont, PA

We began the month of May with beautiful Marian May Devotions, which continued every Wednesday.

On Mother's Day, Mass was offered for God's Blessing upon all mothers by Fr. Sr. Zbigniew Dawid. A complimentary breakfast was served by our men's organization, Y.M.S. of R. We thank them for treating all with a delicious meal and door prizes.

On Pentecost Sunday we ended the SOCL and confirmation classes for the year. Special thanks to Debbie Bilinski for teaching the class.



End of SOCL & Confirmation Classes

On Trinity Sunday we remembered and honored all who served and died for our freedom. A Memorial Day service was held by the church's veterans monument.

We thank the Greater Pittston AMVETS for their participation. They also held a Memorial Service at our parish cemetery. A cookout concluded our Memorial Day celebrations.



AMVETS at the Memorial Day Service



Y.M.S. of R. members cooked breakfast for Mother's Day.



Y.M.S. of R. members served at Mother's Day breakfast,



Parishioners enjoyed a delicious Mother's Day breakfast.



Continued on Page 24.)

(May at Holy Mother of Sorrows Parish - Continued from Page 23.)



Our parishioners also participated in the Dupont Memorial Day parade. Fr. Sr. Zbigniew Dawid had the benediction to conclude the Dupont Memorial Day service.



Fr. Sr. Zbigniew Dawid, Carl Cwikla, Al Micka and Jan Cwikla at the Dupont Parade

Our blanket/mat-making ministry continued, making mats for the homeless, twice this month. On the fourth Thursday of the month we had a food distribution for the needy.

Submitted by Very Rev. Zbigniew Dawid

Special thanks to Mike Manganiello, Lois McHugh and Debbie Fritz for preparing the food and setting up the hall.



Mike Manganiello and Lois McHugh





## Deacon Mark Koscinski Incardinated at Holy Cross Parish

### Woodland Park, NJ

On Sunday May 26, 2024 at 11 am Mass, Rt. Rev. Bernard Nowicki, Administrator of the Central Diocese, P.N.C.C. incardinated Mark Koscinski to become an active Deacon serving in Holy Cross Parish, Woodland Park, NJ, and in the Central Diocese of the Polish National Catholic Church.

Deacon Mark went through years of Diaconate education and training in the diocese and at Holy Cross Parish. He previously served for 15 years as a Deacon in another Christian denomination.

We are very happy having this special celebration in our parish. The Holy Cross Parish will now have a second deacon serving in addition to Deacon Bill Gaydos.

Deacon Mark Koscinski, a certified public accountant, was born and raised in Sayreville NJ. He has been a lifelong resident of New Jersey. Deacon Mark, with his wife Susan and dog Molly, lives in Phillipsburg, NJ. Currently, he is an associate professor of accounting at the Moravian University School of Business and Economics. He also helps out with the Catholic on Campus Club at Moravian. Deacon Mark was tonsured into the clergy in 2002 and was ordained a subdeacon and then deacon in 2006. He has a degree in religion from Drew University and is currently attending Lancaster Theological Seminary on a part-time basis. Deacon Mark looks forward to helping both Holy Cross Parish and the Central Diocese.

I am confident that the service of Deacon Mark Koscinski will bring spiritual benefit to our parish.

Fr. Joseph R. Cyman, Pastor, Holy Cross Parish, Woodland Park, NJ



Rev. Joseph Cyman, Rt. Rev. Bernard Nowicki, Deacon Mark Koscinski, Deacon Bill Gaydos

## Pray, Paint and Sip

### St. Stanislaus Cathedral, Scranton, PA

St. Stanislaus Cathedral Parish in Scranton, PA hosted its very first “Pray-Paint-Sip-Repeat!” event April 6, 2024 in the Parish Hall. Twenty parish members and their guests attended the ‘sold out’ session. It was a wonderful opportunity for everyone to allow their God-given, albeit hidden, artistic talents to shine! Former elementary art teacher, Cindy Davis, opened the session with a scripture reading, an interpretation of the reading, and a prayer for all the aspiring artists. Contemporary Christian music in the background set the stage for the creative juices to start flowing.

Cindy provided all participants with a scripture verse pocket card, a blank canvas, all the materials, and gentle instructions. Although everyone was shown the same ‘example’ painting, it was wonderful to see what creative interpretations that resulted...each one more beautiful and unique than the next.

Afterward, everyone enjoyed fellowship, a variety of beverages and snacks, and had the opportunity to discuss their individual ‘masterpieces’ with each other.

Seating was limited to 20 participants because of the individual attention Cindy provides to everyone while they are painting. Although some ‘would-be artists’ were unable to attend in April, there is already a strong interest in scheduling another session later this year.

Many thanks are extended to both Bishop Bernard Nowicki and Prime Bishop Anthony Mikovsky for their encouragement and support of this event, and to the group of dedicated women who generously donated their time and talents in organizing it.



**Eastern Diocese**

**Northeast Seniorate of the Eastern Diocese Corpus Christi  
Blessed Trinity Parish, Fall River, MA**

The Northeast Seniorate of the Eastern Diocese Corpus Christi Mass and Procession was held at Blessed Trinity Parish in Fall River, MA, during the afternoon of May 31, 2024.

Thank you to Bishop Paul Sobiechowski for preaching God’s Word to us, to Fr. Henryk Wos for leading the Corpus Christi Eucharistic Procession and to our Altar Servers Emmy and Gaby. A dinner followed in the Parish Hall.



## Blessed Trinity Parish Happenings

### Fall River, MA

On Pentecost Sunday, May 19<sup>th</sup>, Blessed Trinity Parish, Fall River, MA, concluded its Parish Baby Shower Drive to help younger struggling families in the Fall River community. An entire SUV full of baby items were delivered to the People Incorporated Children's Center on Friday, May 24<sup>th</sup>. Thanks to all who donated to this effort.



Parish Baby Shower Drive Items

After Holy Mass on Sunday, June 2<sup>nd</sup>, the Sunday with the Octave of Corpus Christi, Clergy Appreciation weekend was celebrated at Blessed Trinity Parish. Parish Chair, Dave, addressed the congregation and Pastor Fr. Sr. Robert Nemkovich, thanking him for all he does for the parish, the Church and the community.



Blessed Trinity Parish Chair, Dave, addressed Fr. Rob and the parishioners after Holy Mass on Clergy Appreciation Weekend.

**Our Saviour's Parish, Woonsocket, RI  
Celebrating 100 Years  
June 2024**



**A History of Our Saviour's Parish**

The Parish of Our Saviour of the Polish National Catholic Church in Woonsocket, RI, was organized as a result of a group of people who wanted to find within this church a freedom of conscience, true teaching and spirit of the Master of Nazareth, deep faith in Divine Providence and an unyielding love of truth, equality and justice, a church dedicated to the service of God's Kingdom and the salvation of mankind.

On December 2, 1923, J. Chrzaszcz, M. Chomka, W. Ostrowski and A. Pluta sought the aid of Bishop-elect Valentine Gawrychowski of Central Falls, RI, to organize the parish. Among its honorable organizers, in addition to the above-mentioned, are J. Dobrowolski, L. Furman, F. Sobota, A. Roszkowski, L. Sambor, W. Wnek, W. Muzyka, J. Grzych, and S. Grzych.

On February 18, 1924, 400 members of St. Stanislaus Kostka Polish Roman Catholic Church voted to secede (*leave the parish*) and to form a new church of Our Saviour's under the wings of the Polish National Catholic Church.

The first pastor to be assigned to the newly organized parish was Bishop-elect Very Rev. Valentine Gawrychowski. On March 2, 1924, the first Mass (in Polish language) was celebrated in the First Methodist Church on 17 Federal St, Woonsocket, RI.

For the cost of \$25,000, the parish purchased a big building (an old armory and later on a garage to fix trucks) on 122 Arnold Street in Woonsocket. According to Mr. Frank Grzych Memories *"The big garage that was to be a church, was made of real heavy planks for the flooring as they were fixing some real heavy trucks. The walls were made of blocks."* This building, after a profound reconstruction and adaptation, became a church for the new community. It also served as a rectory, hall for the Polish school, and theater. The church was dedicated on May 25, 1924, and from that time until 1962, was the place of worship, and served its parishioners with pride and distinction. According to Mr. Edward Nawrocki, a lifelong parishioner, *"During the holiday seasons like Easter and Christmas, if you were ten minutes late for mass, you had to stand in the hallway at the rear of the church as all seats were full."*

Later in the year 1924, the parish purchased the land for the cemetery (49.5 acres) in East Blackstone, MA. The debt was paid off completely in 1943.

In 1928 some renovations were done to the church building at the cost of \$2000. A new floor & stained-glass windows were installed. The steeple & belfry were renewed. At that time the parish had 300 parishioners.

(Continued on Page 30.)

(Our Saviour's Parish Celebrating 100 Years - Continued from Page 25.)

*"This church kept on growing and in the long run, it had more parishioners than the (Polish) Roman Catholic Church (St. Stanislaw Kostka)." (F. Grzych, Memories).*

On May 28, 1932, the new altar at the parish cemetery was dedicated. In October of the same year Bishop of the Eastern Diocese Valentine Gawrychowski of Chicopee, MA, visited the parish to confirm a class of 75 boys and girls.

On September 23, 1934, Our Saviour's celebrated its 10th Anniversary. Prime Bishop Francis Hodur celebrated the solemn Mass and took part in the following celebrations.

On December 7, 1941, when WW2 broke out many parishioners joined the services, and a flag was displayed in the church showing 152 young men that entered the service. Seven of them paid the ultimate price of being killed in action. The seven were: Edward Chorzempa, Walter Dyjak, Ignatz Mucha, Edmund Kozlik, Joseph Haczynski, Edmund Okoniewski, and Eugenie Potrzeba.

In 1943, the parish paid off the debt on the church.

In September 1944, Bishop Joseph Lesniak of the Eastern Diocese visited the parish to dedicate the newly renovated church.

On November 20, 1944, Our Saviour's was visited by Bishop Joseph Padewski who spoke to 250 parishioners about the 18 months he spent imprisoned in the concentration camp, providing a detailed description of the hardship he and others experienced at the hands of the Gestapo. On January 19, 1951, Bishop Padewski was arrested in Poland by the communist government and charged with "violating Polish currency". He was tortured and died in prison. He is venerated as a proto-martyr in the Polish National Catholic Church.

In November 1949 240 families belonged to the parish.

In 1950, a new rectory was purchased on 473 South Main St, Woonsocket for the sum of \$24,000.

On December 28, 1959, the local newspaper *"The Woonsocket Call"* published an article about Fr. Francis Niemiec being transferred after 9 years as the pastor of Our Saviour's to South Deerfield, MA. The article mentioned the new pastor Fr. Valentine Grabek of Lynn, MA as a successor. The article lists Father Niemiec's contributions to the parish as well as a brief bio. *"Our Saviour's Church here has grown to a parish of 300 families, an increase of about 40 percent, it is reported, since Father Niemiec's pastorate." He purchased a parsonage (rectory) at South Main & North Ballou streets, enlarged cemetery property, "was instrumental in the organization of the Mr. and Mrs. Club and of the School of Christian Living which has 7 teachers and 100 children; encouraged Polish education; was a Pawtucket native, had wife Mary (Rybeck) and 2 sons."* Rev. Niemiec became pastor following the death of Rev. Francis B. Miklaszewski.

On March 25, 1962, a disastrous fire ruined the church on Arnold Street. According to the building inspector, *"main fire damage was to the roof and ceiling of the church, but the brick walls are structurally sound."* In that time the parish community used the cellar of the ruined church for their religious services. Later, an agreement was made with Fr. Jellison, the pastor of St. James Episcopal church on Hamlet Ave., for the use of the Episcopal Church for religious services until the church was repaired. Religious instructions and parish groups' meetings were held in Pulaski Hall. The First Universalist Church on Earle St. also offered the use of their auditorium. Parishioners brought pews, statues, and other items from the burned church to Pulaski Hall. The cost of repair to the church was estimated to be \$80,000-\$100,000.

On May 1, 1962, pastor Fr. Valentine Grabek was replaced by Fr. Louis Kaczorowski from New Britain CT (wife Regina Rubacha and son Philip). The church building was repaired by the Lafayette Construction Co., however, the pastor and church members decided to build a new church in another location.

On November 26, 1963, land for a new church and rectory was purchased at Great Road (*now 500 Smithfield Rd.*) for the sum of \$15,000, and on June 16, 1964, the building of a new rectory was started.

On November 15, 1964, the members witnessed the groundbreaking for the new church. The modern church and the rectory were designed by the architect Joseph D. Falcone. The general contractor for the rectory building was Caito & Chartrand Company. The church was built by the Cayer Construction Co. from Woonsocket/N. Smithfield.

In October 1965 the new Church was completed. The project cost was \$200,000.

The ceremony of dedication was held on Sunday, October 10, 1965, by The Rt. Rev. Joseph Soltysiak, Bishop of the Eastern Diocese of the P.N.C.C. Since then, the church of Our Saviour has been the place of worship for the parish community.

On Sunday night, September 27, 2020, the Parish community experienced a small fire accident at the church. The fire damaged the altar of sacrifice, altar linens, microphone, candlesticks, and carpet around the altar. The fire stopped in some miraculous way just at the altar. In a couple of months, the church was cleaned and renovated. New carpets were installed, old lights were replaced with LED ones, the chairs in the sanctuary were renewed, new curtains for the choir and confessionals were installed, and the new altar of sacrifice was purchased. The new altar was consecrated by the Very Rev Paul Sobiechowski the bishop of the Eastern Diocese on the Feast on Corpus Christi on June 16, 2022. The renovation cost (around \$95,000) was covered completely by the *Church Mutual Insurance Company*.

In the near future, the parish community has plans to renew the parish hall and the kitchen.

Over the years the community of Our Saviour's Parish was an active, religious, patriotic, and cultural center for Polish people in the Woonsocket, Blackstone, and Milford areas. All cultural and social life of the Polish people was organized around the church. Weddings, showers, baptisms, funerals, and family anniversaries as well as the Polish and American patriotic anniversaries, took place in the church and had their continuation in the parish hall or the hall of the nearby Polish Pulaski Club. The Pulaski Club was located in a big building with three floors on 33 Arnold Street, almost across the street from the church. It was frequently used by the parish community due to its great hall capacity, kitchen, and big stage. Many weddings, showers, banquets, and other celebrations took place there. Most of the board members of the club were parishioners of Our Saviour's church (*Joseph Kozlik, Memories*).

From the many articles in the local newspaper "*The Woonsocket Call*," we learn of different observances, anniversaries, and celebrations held in the church and Pulaski hall over the years: Pulaski Day – (first Monday of March), Polish Independence Day (November 11), Organization of Polish Legions (August 27), Polish victory over Bolsheviks (August 15), American Independence Day (July 4), Anniversary of Signing of the U.S Constitution (September 17), and many others.

Besides its religious function the parish was also home to different organizations and clubs: Polish Glee Club, Maria Konopnicka Girls Club, Young Polish Women Society, Mr. & Mrs. Club, *Maria Konopnicka* - Polish Dramatic Circle (*The parishioners pride themselves in performing numerous plays in the downstairs hall that included a stage or in Pulaski Hall*), Drum & Bungle Corps (*Marching band-35 members*), Polish National Spójnia (50 members in 1934, and 250 in 1961), and Ladies Society (*ANS*). The parish had two choirs: *Juliusz Slowacki* choir and *Junior* choir. "*The church choir was a challenge. Many, many strong voices. It also was a competition as to who could outdo the other. When they all sang it was a beautiful sound. Some of the singers were: M. Mandziak, S. Zagrodny, Paul Kazanowski (violinists), Leon Nawrocki, Frank Plaistek, Edward Abramek, Steve Bator, M. Skalubinski & many others as well as some women. The music, especially during the Holidays was wonderful.*" (E. Nawrocki). In 1961 to the Parish Junior choir belonged: Nancy Kurek, Constance Lamansky, Elaine Surowiec, Frances Prymak, Nancy Stokes, and others.

All these groups were very active in the social and cultural life of the City of Woonsocket, giving concerts, plays, banquets, and participating in different religious and civic events.



(Continued on Page 32.)

(Our Saviour's Parish Celebrating 100 Years - Continued from Page 31.)

### PASTORS OF OUR SAVIOUR'S PARISH

Bishop Elect Valentine Gawrychowski, December 1924-October 5, 1925  
 Rev. Stephen Plaza, October 5, 1925 - May 1926  
 Rev. A. Wiączkowski, May 1926 – July 1926  
 Rev. Anthony Wojtkowiak, August 1, 1926 – May 31, 1931  
 Rev. Michel Pulit, July 5, 1931 - April 11, 1932  
 Rev. John K. Ziemba, May 1, 1932 - October 1934  
 Rev. Bazyl Sychta, December 1934–1935  
 Rev. Francis Miklaszewski, July 1935 - August 16, 1950  
 Rev. Francis Niemiec, September 10, 1950 – 1960  
 Rev. Walenty Grabek, 1960-1962  
 Rev. Louis Kaczorowski, May 1, 1962 - 1977  
 Rev. Rodney Almieda, 1977 – 1979  
 Rev. Bogdan Hudoba, 1980 – May 15, 2000  
 Rev. Henryk Pietrus, October 2000 - November, 2001  
 Rev. Konrad Krystman, 2002 - October, 2005  
 Rev. Jacek Orzechowski, 2008 - May 2010  
 Rev. Henryk Woś, November 16, 2010 - present

In addition, Rev. Jan Wilczek, Rev. Josef Piatek, Rev. Francis Niemiec, and Rev. Richard Hincken have all faithfully served as interim pastors of Our Saviour's Parish.

Other traditions and customs that are a part of Our Saviour's Polish heritage include:

Dożynki  
 Święconka  
 Opłatek  
 Annual Bazaar

Current church services, organizations, charities and fundraisers include:

Church services  
 Ecumenical spirit  
 Scholl of Christian Living  
 Ladies Adoration Society (SAMBS)  
 Community Free Lunch  
 Free Veterans' Dinner  
 Various charities  
 Polish food sale  
 Meat raffle  
 Annual golf tournament  
 Coffee hour  
 Annual Potluck Picnic  
 Harvest Breakfast





## Western Diocese

## Friends of Father Jerry Gather for Bench Dedication at OSF Saint Luke

By Michael Berry, The Kewanee Voice May 30, 2024



Leslie Rafalko, wife of the late Father Jerry Rafalko, holds a board containing a photo and documents from her husband's life as she sits on the new bench dedicated to his memory. [Photo by Mike Berry]

Father Jerry Rafalko touched many lives in Kewanee, both as pastor of Holy Trinity Polish National Catholic Church and as chaplain for the local hospice program.

On Wednesday, friends of Father Jerry, as he was known here, gathered at OSF Saint Luke Medical Center for the dedication of a new bench that has been installed in his honor.

Father Jerry had served as Holy Trinity's pastor for a number of years before becoming involved with the hospice program in 1999. In that capacity, he counseled and consoled many families who were about to lose loved ones.

In 2020, Father Jerry was named bishop of the Western Diocese, and moved to Chicago. There, he also was pastor of All Saints Cathedral.

He passed away last July 13 at the age of 68.

On Wednesday, friends and parishioners of Father Jerry gathered at Saint Luke to pay him tribute, and to dedicate the bench that has been placed outside the medical center as a memorial to him.

Father Jerry's wife, Leslie, spoke at the dedication ceremony. She said her husband had "touched many, many lives in Kewanee and around here."

He "sees the entire community as his congregation," she said.

A conference room at the medical center was filled with Father Jerry's friends, and Leslie said that turnout was "a testament to how many lives he touched."

(Continued on Page 34.)

(Friends of Father Jerry Gather for Bench Dedication at OSF Saint Luke - Continued from Page 33.)

The group moved outdoors to where the bench had been placed. There, Pastor Ghislain Irai conducted a brief service to bless the new addition near the walkway.

Abigail McCall of the emergency department at Saint Luke said the entire staff of the department — including the doctors from EPSS who staff the department — had contributed to purchase the bench.



Friends of Father Jerry

## St. Michael the Archangel Parish Celebrates Clergy Appreciation Weekend Cedar Lake, IN

On Sunday, June 2<sup>nd</sup>, St. Michael the Archangel Parish, Cedar Lake, IN, celebrated Clergy Appreciation Weekend during their Ma Pa Brunch (combined Mother's and Father's Day meal). Thanks to Father Senior John Kowalczyk for all that you do. Thanks to everyone who attended and worked the Brunch. We appreciate everyone!

Fr. Sr. John Kowalczyk stated, “Thank you to one and all for your words of appreciation, cards, gifts and a delicious cake. Let us all continue to work together to spread the Good News to all the world and especially to our local communities.”



(P.N.C.C. Future Direction June-2024 Continued from Page 4.)

to bless the cornerstone of the church building without them giving up on this desire for freedom, Fr. Hodur decided to bless the cornerstone himself on the day of liberty, July 4. But again, it was a desire for freedom together with responsibility toward and for each other.

We see this in Article 10 within the Confession of Faith of the P.N.C.C. adopted in 1914 which uses words that are reminiscent of the Declaration of Independence, but to these words are added words which speak to the responsibility of each Christian to others: his family, his nation and all people. Likewise, this is seen in the prayer given for Holy Mass on Independence Day (July 4) in the Missal of 1931. "O almighty, eternal God, Who ordained that America should be victorious in freedom, grant that we may use that freedom for the benefit of every citizen and for Your eternal glory. We ask this through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, Who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen." This prayer may well have been the one prayed by Bishop Hodur at the dedication of Spójnia Farm.

### **Action Item**

As an action item for this upcoming month, while you are celebrating some time together make sure that you call to mind the freedom and liberty, together with responsibilities, that we share as Americans. Call to mind that it was on this important day of July 4<sup>th</sup>, that the first parish of Bishop Francis Hodur was blessed and Spójnia Farm dedicated.

As you gather on July 4<sup>th</sup> for Independence Day celebrations and throughout the rest of the month, read and meditate on the tenth article of the Confession of Faith and pray the prayers for loyalty and those in public office. While we certainly may not agree with certain politicians on what they are planning or doing within our nation today, we must pray that the will of God will be accomplished with our help and our prayers. Have pride in our country and what it stands for, all the while knowing that we have not always lived up to these high ideals. Strive in how you live and what you teach your children to realize these treasured national ideals.

## **Confession of Faith of the Polish National Catholic Church**

### **Article 10**

I believe that all people have an equal right to life, happiness and those ways and means which lead to the preservation of existence, to advancement and salvation, but I also believe, that all people have sacred obligations toward God, themselves, their nation, state and all of humanity.

### **Prayer for Loyalty**

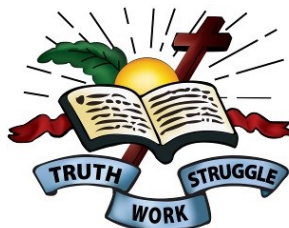
Almighty God, grant us the gift of loyalty. For our household, sustain love and obedience; for our nation, awaken sacrifice and service; for our Church, inspire reverence and devotion; and in everything keep us loyal, faithful and true to You. We ask this through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord. Amen.

### **Prayer for those in Public Office**

Almighty and eternal God, watch over those in public office, so that they may fulfill their duties in accordance with Your divine commandments and principles. May all their deliberations and actions be for the benefit of those whom they serve. We ask this through Jesus Christ, our Lord. 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





### A Fathers' Day Prayer

God our Father, in Your wisdom and love You made all things. Bless these men, that they may be strengthened as Christian fathers. Let the example of their faith and love shine forth. Grant that we, their sons and daughters, may honor them always with a spirit of profound respect. Grant this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

---

