



## Christ is Born

Most Rev. Anthony Mikovsky, Prime Bishop

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness – on them light has shined. You have multiplied the nation, You have increased its joy; they rejoice before You as with joy at harvest, as people exult when dividing plunder. For the yoke of their burden, and the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor, You have broken as on the day of Midian. For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire. For a child has been born for us, a Son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and He is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onward and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this. (Isaiah 9:2-7)

We are all hopefully well acquainted with the story of the manger that is given to us at the Mass of the Shepherds celebrated as the first Mass of the Nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ. The shepherds while out in the fields encounter an angel who tells them that the Savior of the world has been born in Bethlehem; the long awaited Messiah has come to them. Along with this angel, the skies are filled with the refrain of “Glory to God in the highest...” From this point they go to see exactly what has happened and they encounter Mary, Joseph and the Infant Christ Child lying in a manger.

These are interesting words though, “To see exactly what has happened.” We do know that when the shepherds came to the town of Bethlehem and found the manger that was described to them by the angel, then in one sense you could say that they found out

exactly what had happened. In response to this “the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.” (Luke 2:20) But we who continue to witness this scene today, must also know that the birth of Christ is so very much more.

The reading above from the Prophet Isaiah is the one that is read for this same Mass of the Shepherds as well, and we remind ourselves when we read it that the birth of Jesus Christ is the inauguration of the work of salvation which will be accomplished within the entire life of Jesus.

Isaiah knows that the world is lost in darkness. We too certainly know that there is plenty of darkness still to be found within our world. But Isaiah tells us that in the birth of this Child, light will begin to shine into the world. This Light will shine on each and every one of us. The shepherds heard about this Light from the testimony of the angels. They went to the manger and they encountered this Light Who is the Christ Child. They then went about sharing this Light with others they encountered. But even here we know that this is only the beginning of the riches to be revealed in Jesus.

St. Paul in his letters reminds us of this, when he says: “Although I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given to me to bring to the Gentiles the news of the boundless riches of Christ and to make everyone see what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God Who created all things.” (Ephesians 3:8-9) “To them God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.” (Colossians 1:27)

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Isaiah reminds us too that in the life of this Child, the sin and evil which oppresses us, will be erased and smashed. Although the shepherds didn't entirely understand this, we know that this will be accomplished in our Lord offering His life upon the Cross and rising from the dead to bring us new life. Isaiah also tells us that in the life of this Child, there will be authority and justice and peace. Although we know that this is not fully accomplished yet, and it will not be fully accomplished until the second coming of Christ, that it certainly has begun. Within the individual lives of Christians and especially within the life of the Church, justice and peace and forgiveness of sins is proclaimed. Here too the authority of Christ is announced.

We know that there is so very much that must be proclaimed and believed concerning the life of our Lord, but the Solemnity of the Nativity is the time for us to concern ourselves with the start of it all. It this event of the Nativity, God thrusts Himself into our fallen world. When we go to the manger or come to the church, God thrusts Himself into our fallen lives and invites us to accept Him into our world, into our hearts, into our own individual lives.

This Solemnity is a chance for us to stand in the place of the shepherds on that Christmas night. And this reality takes place, not at the manger scenes within

our churches or our homes. It truly takes place at the altar, when Jesus Christ comes to the world again in the Blessed Sacrament. When you stand or kneel before the Blessed Sacrament on the altar, remember that you are in exactly the same place as the shepherds over 2000 years ago.

But knowing now so much more than they did then, we too are called to "return glorifying and praising God," in how our lives are changed and in how the love of Jesus is spread through the building of the kingdom of God within our own lives and together within our parish churches.

Remember my brothers and sisters that at Christmas we have the opportunity to begin again and to allow Christ, not only to come to the world, but to come into our hearts and lives. Let us behold Him present within the Blessed Sacrament as we celebrate the inauguration of this saving work of God.

To my brother Bishops, to the Very Reverend and Reverend Fathers, to the Deacons and all the faithful of the Polish National Catholic Church, and the Nordic Catholic Church, I extend my blessings for a Christmas season that is filled with the love of Christ, and my prayers that the New Year will be one that is filled with opportunities to come to know our Lord better and to serve Him, each other and the Church more strongly.

***God's Blessings on the Solemnity of the  
Nativity of Our Lord.  
Peace and Blessings in the New Year 2026.***



**National Church Center  
Polish National Catholic Church  
Most Rev. Anthony A. Mikovsky, Prime Bishop, P.N.C.C.  
Julie Orzell, Secretary to Prime Bishop, P.N.C.C.**

Blessings and Best Wishes for a Joyous Christmas  
and a Happy New Year!

Supreme Council, Polish National Catholic Church



**Supreme Council Provides Concurrence  
On the Criteria for the Election of Candidates for Bishop**

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



On October 8, 2025, the Most Rev. Anthony Mikovsky, PhD, Prime Bishop, emailed the members of the Supreme Council, requesting concurrence on the Criteria for the Election of Candidates for Bishop document. This document was reviewed on September 23, 2025, by the Church Doctrine Commission with all active bishops of the Church present and will be used for the Election of Candidates for Bishop at the 2026 General Synod. Based on an email response the Supreme Council concurred with the criteria document.

## P.N.C.C. Future Direction December 2025 Nicea at 1700

### Introduction

In this year of 2025, we will spend some time considering the treasures that were left to the Church at the Council of Nicea in the year 325 AD. This year we honor 1700 years since the time of this important Ecumenical Council of the Church. We will examine, not only the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed, but also other aspects of this Council that are important to us in the Polish National Catholic Church today.

On this last month of 2025 we focus on some the attendees of the Council and how these important individuals impacted the Christian Faith and gave witness to Christ.

### Scripture

Isaiah 43:10-12 – You are my witnesses, says the Lord, and my servants whom I have chosen, so that you may know and believe Me and understand that I am He. Before Me no god was formed, nor shall there be any after Me. I, I am the Lord, and beside Me there is no savior. I declared and saved and proclaimed, when there was no strange god among you; and you are My witnesses, says the Lord.

Matthew 5:16 – In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.

Matthew 28:18-20 – And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

Mark 16:15-16 – And [Jesus] said to them, “Go into all the world and proclaim the good news to the whole creation. The one who believes and is baptized will be saved; but the one who does not believe will be condemned.”

Acts 1:8 – But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be My witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

Romans 1:16-17 – For I am not ashamed of the gospel; it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who has faith, to the Jew and also to the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed through faith for faith; as it is written, “The one who is righteous will live by faith.”

2 Timothy 1:8-9 – Do not be ashamed, then, of the testimony about our Lord or of me his prisoner, but join with me in suffering for the gospel, relying on the power of God, Who saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works but according to His Own purpose and grace.

1 Peter 3:15 – In your hearts sanctify Christ as Lord. Always be ready to make your defense to anyone who demands from you an accounting for the hope that is in you.

### Reflection

The story of the First Council of Nicea is not only one about the important doctrines that were promulgated or the beginnings of the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed which we still recite today, but it is also a testimony to the many important individuals who suffered for the faith and fought to keep the faith pure through difficult times.

Although over 300 bishops, and most likely many other supporting individuals, attended the Council of Nicea, we would like to examine just a few of them to show that many bishops of the Church had an impact in a variety of different ways.

We will start with one of the better known bishops, St. Nicholas of Myra (Good old St. Nick.). We are not entirely sure that he attended the Council since his name is not on the official list of attendees, but we do know that he died on December 6, 345 AD and Myra is located in present day Turkey, so it is certainly possible and even likely that he attended the Council. A story written many years later said that St. Nicholas got so upset at

the Council with Arius for his heretical views that during a debate he got up and slapped or punched Arius. In the present day this image has become a meme that circulates each year near December 6. While it certainly might be humorous, it reminds us that saints are not only those who are generous in their giving, as St. Nicholas certainly was, but they are also ones who defend the faith, even when things get difficult.

Another known bishop is Hosius of Corduba who was one of the few Western bishops who attended the Council. Although there were certainly many more bishops from the Eastern portions of the Church, there were representatives from all areas of the Church, making this Council truly Ecumenical. Some assume that Hosius might have presided at the Council since his name is often listed first. Hosius was also one who in his later writings during a time of persecution, defended the Church against intrusion by political leaders. Defending the bishops, he wrote to the Emperor Constantius II: “God gives you the empire; He entrusts ecclesiastical power to us.”

Athanasius of Alexandria was only a deacon at the time of the Council and served as an advisor to Bishop Alexander of Alexandria. At the Council this deacon was a strong defender of the orthodox position against Arius. Athanasius defended the view, which we still proclaim today, that the Father and the Son are of the same substance (homoousius). In the Creed today we proclaim this saying “of one being with the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made.” Athanasius later went on to become an important bishop and Father of the Church. His life show that not only bishops, but all are called to defend the faith.

The last individual is a moving one, Paul of Neocaesarea. He is known for demonstrating the scars that he carried from the religious persecution he suffered under the Emperor Licinius. Tradition tells us that Paul firmly declared his faith and was subjected to beatings, starvation and mutilation. According to the history by Theodoret, Paul had been deprived of the use of both hands by the application of a red-hot iron which destroyed both the nerves and muscles. At the conclusion of the Council of Nicaea when the Emperor Constantine received the bishops, it was recorded that he kissed the burned and crippled hands of Paul. Although not much more is known about him, Paul of Neocaesarea stands as a loud testimony to the strength of his Christian witness under persecution.

And these are only a few of the individuals that played a part in the important Council of the Church. Each of the bishops and others who attended came from different backgrounds and witnessed to Jesus Christ through their lives. Each and every one of them is to be honored for their role in the life of the Church.

### **Action Item**

As an action item, when you pray the Nicene Creed during Holy Mass remember that this Statement of Faith was given to us by individuals who all strove within their own lives to live by the faith handed down by our Lord Jesus Christ. Many of them suffered greatly for this faith, and were even martyred. Others had lives marked by examples of heroic virtue. Some were great teachers, who wrote or preached. Some gave witness to the faith, by acts of love and charity.

Realize that the Church is not just a philosophy whereby we live our lives, but it is relationship with our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. It is relationship that is more important than anything in this world. Those who attended the Council of Nicaea put this relationship first, in what they taught, in what they wrote and most importantly in how they lived.

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



### **Vocation as Incarnation**

Rev. Jim Konicki, National Vocations Director

We offer you the Savonarola Theological Seminary Newsletter for December 2025 focused on Jesus' Incarnation (His becoming human) and the Incarnational Nature of Vocations.

Here we are, in December, journeying through a time of expectation. As the people of Israel eagerly awaited the Messiah, so we too eagerly await our Savior's return in glory. Then of course we experience that day Jesus, God incarnate, was born. After that, well, we celebrate and as is good tradition, we should celebrate for a full forty days until the Solemnity of the Presentation on February 2nd. Yes, my tree and lights tend to stay up until then.

As anyone preparing for first holy communion could tell us, God is a Spirit. We cannot see Him, and what we can perceive of His reality is kind of in the shadows, there, but not easily perceptible.

Throughout the Old Testament God inspired and sent leaders and prophets to make His will better known. They continually called people to recognize the reality of YHWH, to see what He was doing for His chosen people. Finally, at a time predestined by God, the Angel Gabriel came to Mary to ask for her cooperation in bearing the Son of God, in giving human nature to God's Son.

God became man so He might teach us – straight from the source. He became man so He might show us that we can withstand evil as human beings and that we too can know, love, serve, and belong to His heavenly Father.

As St. Paul tells us in 2 Corinthians 5:21, sinless God became man so He would be treated as a sinner, killed on the cross, so believers (us) could be made righteous through Him.

*For our sake He made Him to be sin Who knew no sin, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God.*

Just from this brief reflection we can see how God's taking on our human nature, His becoming incarnate, is so essential in our journey to heaven. God did not have to, but did become real, i.e., we could see, hear, touch, dine with, laugh and weep with Jesus.

So it is with vocations to the priesthood and diaconate. The Church needs men to step up, to be an incarnational reality for its believing people. Those priests and deacons to be are key components of the relational reality of the Church. Church is family and community; it is the ingathering of the saved. People need to see, hear, touch, dine with, laugh and weep with those men because through them God's presence is made most real.

Please continue to pray for vocations, those who are being so generous in supporting the Seminary and for our Seminarians. If you are called to be that incarnational reality in the lives of the faithful, respond, and reach out to me at 518-522-0944 or [rev.konicki@savonarola.net](mailto:rev.konicki@savonarola.net).



We have established a prayer line for the seminary. Send your prayer requests by E-mail to [prayer@savonarola.net](mailto:prayer@savonarola.net).

We also established a Seminary website at <https://www.savonarola.net>, and a Seminary Instagram channel at <https://www.instagram.com/savonarola1914/>. Check them out.

If you can, please provide support to the Seminary Fund. Faithful P.N.C.C. member's support is vital to keeping the lights on and the seminarians' educational needs met. Donations can be sent to The Savonarola Theological Seminary Fund, c/o The Office of the Prime Bishop, 1006 Pittston Ave., Scranton, PA 18505-4109. God bless your generosity!

## The Incarnation: God Is With Us

Cleric Joel Smith

The Incarnation is one of the most extraordinary displays of divine love and humility – God entering human life not from afar, but by fully embracing our fragile, vulnerable condition. In Jesus, the infinite and eternal Word becomes finite, the transcendent becomes immanent, showing us a God who doesn't stay distant but chooses to be close.

By taking on human flesh, Jesus shows that our humanity isn't something to be looked down on or discarded, but something sacred and cherished. He affirms human experience in all its complexity - our struggles, limitations, and our capacity for both weakness and courage. Through the Incarnation, we see that our embodied lives matter deeply to God. Jesus fully enters into human vulnerability - experiencing hunger, exhaustion, grief, temptation, and ultimately suffering and death. This means our pain isn't alien to God but something God understands from the inside. When we feel most alone, broken, or misunderstood, Christ has gone before us through those very struggles. Moreover, the Incarnation shows us that redemption isn't just about God saving us from a distance, but about God joining us in our reality. Jesus doesn't just teach about love — He embodies love. He doesn't only talk about reconciliation — He makes it happen.

In my own understanding, the Incarnation keeps inviting me to see the holy in everyday moments — to find divine presence in acts of kindness, genuine connection, and the dignity found in our struggles and resilience. It changes how I see myself and others - not as isolated, but as inherently valuable and capable of being open to divine love. This theological truth becomes deeply personal: God says "yes" to humanity in Jesus. Not just to an abstract group, but to each individual story — my story, your story. Every story matters in this great story of divine love.

## The Manger is the Cross

Cleric Jon Johnson

What has heav'n in its possession now that God has left its splendors?  
 He has enter'd in compassion, Man's domain, His aid to render.  
 And we know we were not blameless, for our Lord had sorely suffere'd;  
 And the Word was made incarnate, and in truth he dwelt among us.

From the hymn, God is Born, Bóg się rodzi, Franciszek Karpiński

What makes a song a hymn? Many musicians and theologians debate the criteria, but most agree it must be “singable”, have a meter that a congregation without musical training can follow, and must expound on theological truth or scripture. Such as it is with this Polish carol, “God is Born”. The lyrics, written by Karpiński,

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date back to 1792, and the melody, as many hymns are, was a borrowed tune, this one, having said to be borrowed from a Polish Coronation polonaise for Polish kings, dating to the 16th century.

Many of carols and the hymns we hear at Christmas are warm and sentimental, singing of the “little baby in a manger,” or Shepherds or the star that the Wisemen saw. Although there is nothing wrong with such devotional pieces, this majestic hymn doesn't waste its time on sentiment, but on the all-important truth of why we have Christmas- the Incarnation. The Word of God, left the splendor of heaven and became man in flesh. The Word is the Truth and dwelt among us. Why? Because we are sinful and need a Savior.

We don't often think to associate Christmas with the cross, yet every Mass is a renewal of Christ's passion, death and resurrection. Our week of family and parish life revolves (or should revolve) around Sunday and the celebration of the Eucharist. It was by no mistake that Christ was born in Bethlehem, whose very name means, “house of bread,” for Christ came to be the very bread of life for us. His very body, through his sacrifice for us became our spiritual food, feeding our bodies and souls.

So why does the church year begin with Advent and Christmas, if the Resurrection of Christ is the most important mystery of our faith? Well, to paraphrase St. Athanasius, “without the Incarnation, there is no Redemption.” We cannot experience Christ's Redemption without his Incarnation. This was God's loving plan to redeem us. The two great acts are intertwined, dependent on each other. They are the two greatest mysteries of our faith.

The Incarnation is so important to our faith, that the P.N.C.C. has maintained the ancient practice of genuflecting after the words, “and became man,” in the Creed, while the Roman Catholics have abandoned it. This practice, dates to the 6th century and was put into practice in the liturgy after the earlier Councils of Ephesus and Chalcedon which defined the Incarnation to combat the heresies of that day. You'll also note that the Incarnation is so important, that the priest only genuflects at one other time during the contemporary Rite of Mass, that being at the actual consecration of the elements of the Eucharist.

In his classic book, “The Life of Christ,” Bishop Fulton Sheen reminds us that, “the cross is the manger of Bethlehem continued.” When we see the manger, we should not only recall the incarnation, but also the redemption the manger brings. When we see the cross, we should recall God's loving plan to become incarnate for us so that we might be redeemed. The cross reminds us of the manger, the manger reminds us of the cross.

You may notice in many of our older church buildings, like my home parish in McAdoo, giant crucifixes by the exterior doors near the holy water fonts. You may think this is some kind of old-fashioned statement to remind people they're going into a church. This actually reflects ancient practice of putting a crucifix near a doorway or in a hallway so that those that pass it might stop to touch it or kiss it, to be reminded of Christ's love for us. The practice dates back to the monasteries of 6th century and was common practice in homes and churches as well. It's often called, “saluting the crucifix” or “taking the crucifix” in Spanish, “tomar el crucifijo,” as in taking Christ with you as you go by or out the door. Perhaps this would be a great practice for you to start when going in and out of church and also at home, where you could put a crucifix by a doorway or a hallway? It's a new church year, let it be a new you, too!

Remember, when you see the manger, think of the love of the cross. When you see the cross, think of the love brought to us in the manger.

### **Being an Incarnational Church**

Cleric David Dudzinski

The Incarnation has been important to my Faith Journey because meditating on it- how God *literally* became Man- is what makes the whole enterprise of Faith worth it. If God never *Himself* came to us in human form as

Jesus, Christianity would just be another mere philosophy, and we who are studying to be Priests would just be mere philosophers- really no better than walking self help books!

But Christ wasn't merely a "nice guy" or a "self help guru." He's God! What a gift we have! God came to us in human form- *the* creator of the universe came to *us*! As if that wasn't enough, we go to meet Him, not in some "pie in the sky" *warm and fuzzy* kind of way- *literally* in the Bread and Wine *every Sunday*! So I implore you, Brothers and Sisters in Christ, keep this in mind next time you approach the Altar, *God is there waiting for YOU!*

## **Christmas**

Cleric Todd Godwin

My audience here knows that Christmas is important. Many across the USA and in some parts beyond, know this as well. But we need to remind ourselves that the Church as a whole came to this slowly. The gospels of Mark and John have no narrative of Jesus' birth. Thus, without the full set of gospels, which we call "synoptic," from the Greek meaning "seeing together," we would not have the full story. Even as late as the 300s people still didn't fully get it, and did not have the full vision of Christmas.

It is for this reason that I want to focus our attention for a moment on the book *On the Incarnation* by Athanasius of Alexandria (c.296-373). Athanasius's name is and will always be tied to his efforts to combat the Arian heresy—the notion that Christ was a created being, and however special a person, some people of the later Roman empire thought Jesus was a created, albeit still divine, being. But Athanasius reminded everyone that without a Jesus that is fully God from the beginning, we as humans cannot be fully saved. And with this, we get a lot more with Athanasius.

For example, Athanasius reminds us that Jesus' human-divine entry into the world was an act of renewal of the world. He writes: "the renewal of creation has been wrought by the Self-same Word Who made it in the beginning. There is thus no inconsistency between creation and salvation; for the one Father has employed the same Agent for both works." God's entry into the world, in Jesus, is part of the world's re-creation. We also come to see God fully, and for the first time, in Jesus' entry into the world. "He manifested Himself by a body in order that we might behold and know the Father," writes Athanasius. This pulls the eyes of men to God for the first time. "Through His works He revealed Himself as the Word of God... so that by knowing Him, men might know the Father," writes Athanasius.

This means that the magic of Christmas - however much we decry Hollywood and Wall Street overdoing this for profit - the unity with God that comes through His embodied nearness is part of God's vision of the Church from the beginning, yet not wholly celebrated within the Church from the beginning. "He took to Himself a body that He might offer it for all, and through it might unite all to Himself," writes Athanasius. The Incarnate Word repels evil too, simply by being present. As Athanasius says, "the presence of the Savior in our midst is the destruction of the devil... For if the idols are destroyed and the demons driven out at the mere naming of His Name, how much more at His actual presence in the flesh."

Athanasius' core vision then that: 1) The Word's coming renews creation, 2) His visible presence reveals the Father, 3) Taking on a human body had already begun the healing of humanity, and 4) His embodied presence sanctifies the cosmos, is, arguably behind every nativity scene that we will see on every lawn or in every church this Christmas. We sense, intuitively, that Bethlehem is where salvation began and is as important as was Jerusalem and Christ's death on the cross. Though we cannot say that Athanasius taught us this, we can say that Athanasius reminded the Church of this, and that it stands behind every Christmas tree, every Christmas song, and every visit to Santa for a picture at the mall. Let its true source not be forgotten.

## Annual Christmas and New Year Greetings

We wish you a Blessed and Merry Christmas and a Happy and Healthy New Year!  
 Prime Bishop Emeritus Robert and Florence Nemkovich  
 Cape Coral, FL

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!  
 May your home be filled with peace, love and joy!  
 Nick and Jessica Kazinetz

Merry Christmas!  
 Peace on Earth.  
 Michael R. & Mary Mietlicki

May you have the gift of Faith, the blessing of Hope,  
 and the Peace of His Love at Christmas and always.  
 Clergy and Faithful of the Eastern Diocese

All Saints Cathedral Parish  
 Rev. David M. Rowinski, Administrator  
 May the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary & Joseph be your companions this season!

Holy Trinity Cathedral, Manchester, NH  
 Rt. Rev. Paul Sobiechowski, Pastor  
 Worship Christ, the Newborn King!

St. Stanislaus, B&M, Cathedral  
 Parish Committee and Parishioners wish  
 A Blessed and Merry Christmas to all.

May you have a Blessed Christmas  
 and a Happy New Year!  
 Clergy Circle of the Western Diocese

Plymouth Seniorate of the Central Diocese Clergy  
 Very Rev. Lucian Urbaniak, Rev. Robert Plichta, Rev. Boguslaw Janiec  
 God's blessing to all this Christmas season!

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!  
 Sharing with you the glory, the wonder and the miracle of this holy season.  
 The United Young Men's Society of Resurrection

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

St. Stanislaus Cathedral Parish ANS Society, Scranton, PA  
 Kathleen Michalina, President  
 Wishing you all faith-filled moments & God's grace this Christmas!

Holy Mother of Sorrows ANS - Dupont, PA  
 May the spirit of our Lord Jesus be in  
 your hearts and homes this Christmas Season!

Guardian Angel Parish in Los Angeles  
 Fr. Andrew Machowski  
 May you have a Blessed Christmas and Happy New Year!

Holy Cross Parish – Hamtramck, MI  
 Very Rev. Jaroslaw Nowak, Pastor  
 Celebrating His birth with love!



Holy Mother of Sorrows Parish, Dupont, PA  
 Very Rev. Zbigniew Dawid  
 May the light of Christ shine in your home this season.

Holy Trinity Parish, Plantsville, CT  
 Rev. Justin Daviault, Pastor  
 Wishing you peace, joy and blessings this Holy Season!

Christ is born, rejoice!  
 Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Parish, Lilly, PA  
 Rev. Dr. Scott J. Lill, Pastor

Our Saviour's Parish, Woonsocket, RI  
 Rev. Henryk Vos, Pastor

Peace, love and joy at Christmas & in the New Year!  
 Fr. Koterba & Parish Committee  
 P.N.C.C. Church of Resurrection, Brooklyn, NY

Resurrection Parish, Temperance, MI  
 Very Rev. Jaroslaw Nowak, Administrator  
 May our Savior's birth bring us blessings.

May Christ's birth bring hope and joy to the World!  
 Christmas blessings to our entire P.N.C.C. family.  
 Saint Barbara Parish, Houtzdale, PA

St. Casimir's Parish, Lowell, MA  
 Rev. Andrzej Tenus, Pastor  
 Christmas blessings and happy New Year!

St. John the Baptist Parish – Frackville, PA  
 Rev. Robert Plichta, Pastor – Ann Marie Wycheck, Chair  
 May your holiday season be blessed with the Spirit of Christ!

Wishing you a Blessed Christmas Season!  
 St. Mary's Parish – South Bend, IN  
 Very Rev. Charles Zawistowski, Pastor

St. Mary's Parish, Winnipeg Manitoba CANADA  
 Parish Committee  
 May the blessing of Christ's birth bring joy and peace to all!

St. Michael the Archangel Parish, Cedar Lake, IN  
 Very Rev. John P. Kowalczyk, Jr., Pastor  
 May the newborn Christ child bring blessings to all!

All glory to the Lamb of God!  
 A Blessed Nativity to all!  
 St. Paul Parish, Belleview, FL

Saint Stephen the Martyr Parish, Reading, PA  
 Very Rev. Donald E. Wunderlich, Pastor  
 May the birth of Christ bring peace to all!

St. Valentine Parish, Northampton, MA  
 Rev. Adam Czarnecki, Pastor  
 May the birth of Jesus bring blessings to us all!

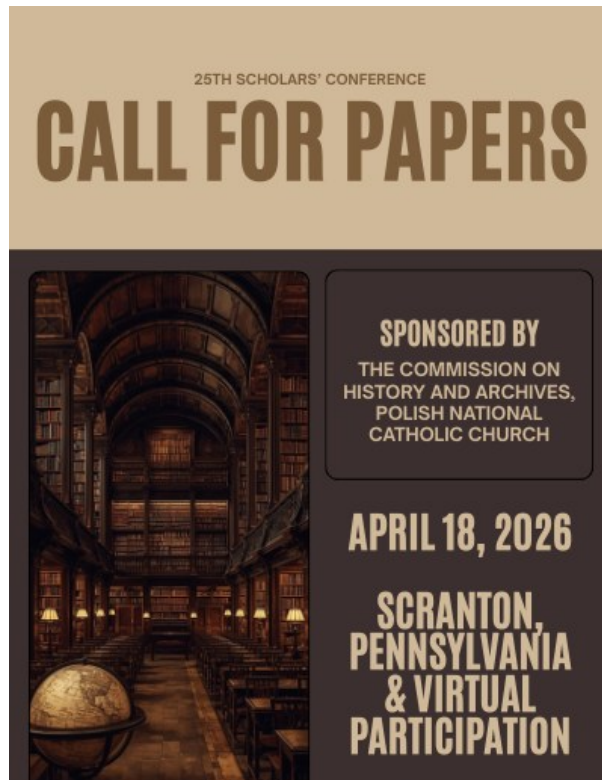
SS. Peter & Paul's Parish, McAdoo, PA  
 Rev. Boguslaw Janiec, Pastor  
 We wish everyone a Blessed Christmas!

## Call for Papers

### 25th Scholars' Conference

*April 18, 2026 – Scranton, Pennsylvania & Virtual Participation*

Sponsored by  
*The Commission on History and Archives  
 Polish National Catholic Church*



The conference invites academic scholars in the social sciences, theology, and humanities to present research on:

- \* The Polish National Catholic Church (P.N.C.C.)
- \* P.N.C.C. associations, organizations, and outreaches
- \* Independent religious movements that preceded or paralleled the P.N.C.C.
- \* Related historical, theological, and cultural topics

#### Submission Guidelines

- \* Proposal Deadline: March 1, 2026
- \* Accepted papers will be presented at the conference and considered for publication in the *P.N.C.C. Studies Journal*.
- \* Poster presentations are welcomed as an alternative or complement to traditional papers.

#### Graduate Student Incentive

Graduate student presenters are eligible for a \$500 stipend/scholarship.

#### Submissions & Inquiries

Please submit proposals, article manuscripts for publication consideration, or questions to: [dr.ploskonka@savonarola.net](mailto:dr.ploskonka@savonarola.net)

#### Contact

Rev. Jim Ploskonka, PhD  
 Commission on History and Archives  
 216.650.5596

## Announcement from the Commission on History and Archives

### Polish National Catholic Church

#### The 25th Scholars' Conference – April 18, 2026

The Commission is pleased to announce that the 25th Scholars' Conference will be held on Saturday, April 18, 2026, in Scranton, Pennsylvania, with hybrid opportunities for both in-person and virtual participation.

The Scholars' Conference has become one of the P.N.C.C.'s premier academic events, bringing together historians, theologians, clergy, laity, and academic researchers from across the country and beyond. Since its inception, the conference has provided a forum for serious scholarship in the social sciences and humanities, with a focus on the history, theology, and culture of the Polish National Catholic Church and related movements.


For the 2026 gathering, we invite proposals for papers and poster presentations that address the following areas:


- \* The history, growth, and witness of the Polish National Catholic Church
- \* P.N.C.C. associations, organizations, and outreaches
- \* Independent religious movements that either preceded or developed contemporaneously with the P.N.C.C.
- \* Related theological, cultural, and historical studies within the broader Catholic and Christian tradition

**Submission Deadline:** Proposals must be submitted by March 1, 2026. Selected papers will be presented during the conference and will be considered for publication in upcoming volumes of the *P.N.C.C. Studies Journal*.

Graduate students are warmly encouraged to participate. A \$500 stipend/scholarship will be awarded to qualifying graduate student presenters, in recognition of the need to encourage and mentor a new generation of scholars.

The 2026 conference represents more than an academic exercise—it is a gathering of minds and hearts committed to the preservation and interpretation of the Church's story. It is also an opportunity to reflect on the enduring legacy of Prime Bishop Francis Hodur and the generations of faithful who built the P.N.C.C., while also envisioning how our Church's history continues to inspire its future.





**Winter Clothing Drive**  
**In need of: Coats, hats, gloves, pants, sweatshirts, socks, t-shirts, underwear, & undershirts.**

**UNITED Y.M.S. OF R.**  
 For more information, contact your diocesan rep:

**Buffalo-Pitt:** Bob Giczkowski & Dave Pecynski  
**Central:** Andrew Humphreys & Kevin McConlogue  
**Eastern:** Fr. Justin Davault  
**Western:** Rev. Jason Soltysiak & Rev. Ploskonka


**United Y.M.S. of R. Winter Clothing Drive**

The United Y.M.S. of R. Board is calling on all Y.M.S. of R. Branches and Polish National Catholic Churches to be Christ to your community!

**Needed:** Articles of clothing to help dull the winter chill.  
**Your Reward:** A good deed that reflects the love of Jesus.  
**Church Reward:** Monetary Check to host a social gathering at your parish to spread fellowship. 1<sup>st</sup> place \$200.00, 2<sup>nd</sup> place \$150.00, 3<sup>rd</sup> place \$100.00

The drive begins November 1, 2025 and will conclude January 4, 2026.

Be Christ in your local Community!



**The Scorecard**

Coats:	25 points
Sweatshirts:	15 points
Pants:	10 points
T-shirts:	5 points
Winter hat:	5 points
Gloves:	5 points
Underwear:	1 point
Undershirt:	1 points
Socks:	1 point per pair
<b>Monetary donation:</b>	
<b>\$1 = 1 POINT</b>	
<b>Ex. \$200 = 200 points</b>	

## Season of Advent & Twelve Days of Christmas

**Cathy Andersen, All Saints Cathedral, Chicago**

Advent is a season of HOPE and expectation. A time to be attentive and alert. A time of preparation and watchfulness. It is a time to nurture PEACE and experience JOY. Advent is a period of waiting in anticipation of the LOVE that is made incarnate with the birth of Jesus.

Advent is also the beginning of a new liturgical calendar year in the Church. An Advent Wreath is displayed at the altar and a new candle lit every week to remind us that we are to walk in the light of the Lord at all times. Each week concentrates on a different theme (hope, peace, joy and love) with special Advent prayers.

During this time, we are very busy – that is, we are much busier than usual. We take additional time off from work to spend with family and friends making holiday memories. We prepare our home and yards with decorations. We spend time buying gifts for our loved ones. We send greeting cards to family, friends and business colleagues. We eat an extraordinary amount of Christmas cookies and other holiday treats such as fruit-cake.

We must also, however, slow down and make time to prepare ourselves spiritually so we are able to receive the gift of Jesus on Christmas. As the well-known phrase goes, “Jesus is the reason for the season”. We can focus on our spiritual life during Advent by praying, attending church services, participating in an Advent Retreat or immersing ourselves in an Advent Bible Study.

Holiday music and Christmas songs are also an important part of the season. Whether it is the beautiful music we grew up with, the new contemporary songs that are heard on the radio way before Thanksgiving, or the exquisite Kolędy we sing on Christmas Eve.

One song I would like to discuss at this time is the Twelve Days of Christmas. During the dark time in history (approximately 1558 to 1829) when Catholics were persecuted in England for practicing their faith, the words for the Twelve Days of Christmas became a mode by which Catholics could practice their religion. While the lyrics may have changed a bit since then, and the melody added in 1909 by English composer Frederic Austin, nevertheless, the practices of Catholicism are still incorporated in the song.

**First Day of Christmas: Partridge in a Pear Tree** – Partridges sacrifice their lives for their babies. The partridge represents Jesus who gave up His life for us, and the pear tree symbolizes the Cross.

**Second Day of Christmas: Two Turtle Doves** – Turtle doves mate for life and are seen as symbols of love, fidelity and connection. The two turtle doves represent the Old and New Testaments which are deeply connected and meaningful.

**Third Day of Christmas: Three French Hens** – The three French hens signify the three theological virtues of faith, hope and love OR the three Persons of the Holy Trinity – God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit.

**Fourth Day of Christmas: Four Calling Birds** – The four calling birds signify the four Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.

**Fifth Day of Christmas: Five Golden Rings** – The five golden rings represent the five books of the Old Testament, also known as the Pentateuch or the Torah. They include Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy.

**Sixth Day of Christmas: Six Geese-a-Laying** – The six geese-a-laying symbolize the six days of creation, emphasizing God's power as the creator of the world:

1. God created the heavens and the earth.
2. God created the sky and seas.
3. God created the land and plants.
4. God created the sun, moon and stars.
5. God created fish and birds.
6. God created land animals and man.

**Seventh Day of Christmas: Seven Swans-a-Swimming** – The seven swans-a-swimming represent the seven

gifts of the Holy Spirit which are wisdom, understanding, counsel, strength, knowledge, piety/Godliness and fear of the Lord.

**Eighth Day of Christmas: Eight Maids-a-Milking** – The eight maids a-milking symbolize the eight Beatitudes preached by Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount found in Matthew 5:3-10:

1. Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
2. Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.
3. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.
4. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.
5. Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.
6. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.
7. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God.
8. Blessed are those who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

**Ninth Day of Christmas: Nine Ladies Dancing** – The nine ladies dancing represent the nine fruits of the Holy Spirit which are love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

**Tenth Day of Christmas: Ten Lords-a-Leaping** – The ten lords-a-leaping signify the Ten Commandments:

1. You shall have no other gods before me.
2. You shall not take the name of the Lord God in vain.
3. Remember to keep holy the Sabbath Day.
4. Honor your father and your mother.
5. You shall not kill.
6. You shall not commit adultery.
7. You shall not steal.
8. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.
9. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife.
10. You shall not covet your neighbor's goods.

**Eleventh Day of Christmas: Eleven Pipers Piping** – The eleven pipers piping represent the eleven faithful disciples of Jesus: Simon (whom He named Peter), Andrew, James, John, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James the Younger, Simon and Judas (son of James).

**Twelfth Day of Christmas: Twelve Drummers Drumming** – The twelve drummers drumming represent the twelve points of doctrine in the Apostles' Creed, which summarizes the core beliefs of Christianity:

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

1. I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord.
2. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary.
3. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.
4. He descended into hell. On the third day He rose again.
5. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty.
6. He will come again to judge the living and the dead.
7. I believe in the Holy Spirit,
8. the holy catholic Church and the communion of saints,
9. the forgiveness of sins,
10. the resurrection of the body,
11. and life everlasting. Amen.

I hope the next time you hear the song Twelve Days of Christmas, you will remember some of the interesting things noted above.

I wish you an incredibly Happy Holiday Season and Blessed Christmas! May God continue to abundantly bless you throughout 2026!

## Buffalo-Pittsburgh Diocese

### Christmas Message from the Bishop of the Buffalo-Pittsburgh Diocese, P.N.C.C. Rt. Rev. John Mack

And she brought forth her firstborn Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling clothes and laid Him in a manger. (Luke 2: 7)

As we approach yet another season of Advent and the fulfillment of God's plan for the Incarnation of Christ coming down to earth, we might begin to question God's seemingly cavalier attitude about details.

In a world that is saturated to the point of numbness with details, facts and figures, probability charts, social media and AI, how in the world could the most important event in the history of creation been planned so haphazardly? God certainly allowed some clues. The words of the ancient prophets foretold the coming of the promised Messiah. But who listened? The pregnancy of Mary was quite the shocker to Joseph, her betrothed husband. Imagine Mary having to reveal her pregnancy to Joseph, saying it was the Holy Spirit who *overshadowed her*. She received the message from an angel? Who's in control here? Thankfully Joseph was prevented from doing Mary any harm, as would be the custom in that day. He was going to *dismiss her quietly* when he finally received the *word* that God was in control. The arduous journey to Bethlehem with an expectant mother, the meager conditions for the delivery and then having to flee into Egypt after a tyrannical King conspired to *eliminate the competition* were more than challenging. To use a phrase common in our day: You can't make this up! Therefore, we sit and ponder and scratch our heads thinking: Who's in control here? And the answer comes: God is in control. Just as He always was, just as He always is and just as He will always be until the end of the age. Yes, this was truly a miracle birth! All that we can do is watch it unfold Christmas after Christmas, day after day, month after month, year after year. We watch the miracle of Christmas unfold in the lives of those around us. We watch the miracle of Christmas unfold in our own lives as well if we welcome Him in.

The season brings both joy and sorrow to people's lives. Some are blessed with family and friends, good cheer, love and laughter. Others find themselves alone and in darkness due to the circumstances of life. There are many who mourn the loss of loved ones in this season, well into the years. Some seek to create their own joy through the giving of gifts to friends and family. This is not a bad thing in and of itself. Acts of gift-giving express our love and appreciation to those whom we love. Too often however, people over-extend themselves in buying all these gifts (with good intentions) and most borrow on their credit cards to pay off the debts. Isn't it somewhat ironic that we can also think of Jesus as being someone who *borrowed* as well. I share with you a few words from a selection entitled "the borrowed manger."

"Have you wondered, why God allowed His Son to be born in a manger? He, Who could have had the most that heaven and earth together could offer, settled instead for the least. So what can we learn about Jesus and why He came from that simple birth in a little manger?"

First, it's fitting that the Lamb of God should be born surrounded with animals, many of whom were to be used in sacrifice. Secondly, the manger made Him accessible. Shepherds hurrying to the stables did not have to flash identification cards to get by. Wise men didn't have to write for an interview or sit in a waiting room while their credentials were cleared by some Secret Service agent. Thirdly, the manger demonstrated His attitude of simplicity. Things were never important to Jesus. People were and still are. He always moved toward them and into their lives. He chose to be born in that borrowed stable, away from everything comfortable and easy. Does that surprise you? Later He said that when He slept, He had no bed. He borrowed a basket that bright spring morning before He sent the people away fully fed. He borrowed a boat from which to preach His Father's love to the men who stood that day on Galilee's beach, wanting to hear His message again. He borrowed a donkey on which to ride into Jerusalem and He borrowed a room in which to meet His friends and have a last supper together. He borrowed a table on which to eat, and the towel He used to dry His disciples feet was not His own. He borrowed a cross on which to die and even borrowed a tomb in which to lie. And yet the whole universe was His to enjoy.

Now He's looking for a life to share. It doesn't have to be regal, elegant or fancy. In fact the plainer, the simpler – the better . . . just an open heart into which He can move. *Maybe yours.*"

(Continued on bottom of Page 17.)

**Central Diocese****Christmas Message****Bishop Emeritus Bernard Nowicki, Pastor, St. Stanislaus Cathedral Parish**

To the Faithful of our Beloved Church Everywhere:

May your experience of this year's Christmas season bring to each of your hearts and to each of your homes the blessing of peace. May Christ the Light deepen that peace through his illumination of the truth that our God, infinite and eternal, becomes one of us; that he took our human nature and gave it eternal value.

Be glad this Season! Rejoice merrily, faithful ones! Christ the Light has come into our world! With his birth, the darkness that covered the earth gave way to the bright dawn of the Word made flesh who dwelt among us. Be glad the more and rejoice yet more exuberantly that he who is our God-made-visible is ever with us through the precious gift of His Body and Blood in the Eucharist. The new light that dawned upon the world is present to each of us, Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity, every time we celebrate his life at the altar. All this, indeed, is the stupendous gift of Christmas.

A very Merry Christmas to you all! Welcome Christ this Season with faith reborn.

Wesołych Świąt Bożego Narodzenia! Feliz Navidad!

Bishop Emeritus Bernard

**Thanksgiving Service at All Saints Parish****Rome, NY**

All Saints Parish, Rome, NY, hosted a Mohawk Valley Seniorate Thanksgiving service on Saturday, November 15th, 2025. The service featured Holy Mass with scripture, prayers of thanksgiving, congregational singing and shared meal. This occasion provided a chance to reflect on God's blessings and practice gratitude, including members sharing testimonies of thankfulness. We also used this opportunity to extend gratitude through community service and acknowledge that thankfulness is a spiritual practice of trust in God through all circumstances. Thank you to all who attended!



(Christmas Message from the Bishop of the Buffalo-Pittsburgh diocese - Continued from Page 16.)

May this season of our Lord's Incarnation be one that finds you borrowing the attributes of our Lord. May your life proclaim peace, joy, love and good will to those near and far; to friend and stranger alike.

May you and yours be blessed this Christmastide and always.

Bishop John E. Mack / Buffalo-Pittsburgh Diocese

## All Soul's Day

### Scranton, PA

On November 3, St. Stanislaus Cathedral Parish in Scranton, PA, celebrated All Soul's Day with an evening prayer service at the Cathedral Cemetery. The commemoration of all the faithfully departed is a time-honored tradition. As the clergy blessed the graves of our departed parishioners, those who gathered remembered and reflected, and prayed for the continuity of life after death.



## Holy Mother of Sorrows Parish November Highlights

### Dupont, PA

Holy Mother of Sorrows Parish, Dupont, PA, honored First Responders and Veterans with a Luncheon on Saturday, November 8, 2025. The parish hosted First Responders from Dupont, Avoca, Duryea, Hughestown, Moosic, and Pittston Twp. The Luncheon featured: Roast Beef, Homemade Mashed Potatoes, Chicken, Pasta, Salad and Dessert. We would like to thank all our volunteers for their work and dedication.



**Richard Janesko, Chief of the Moosic Police Department, Very Rev. Zbigniew Dawid and Sean Doran, Chief of the Dupont Police Department**



**First Responders, Veterans and their Families at the Luncheon**

(Continued on Page 20.)

(Holy Mother of Sorrows Parish November Highlights - Continued from Page 19.)

Holy Mother of Sorrows Parish and First Baptist Church, Pittston worked together to prepare 913 Thanksgiving Dinners served to the community of Greater Pittston. Dinners were cooked and packed at Holy Mother of Sorrows Parish Hall in Dupont. The Thanksgiving Turkey Dinner Giveaway was held on Tuesday, Nov. 25 at First Baptist Church in Pittston, PA.



**Fr. Sr. Zbigniew Dawid and Pastor James Breese**



**Our Parish Volunteers**



**Holy Mother of Sorrows Parish and First Baptist Volunteers packing Thanksgiving Dinners**



**Volunteers of two churches at work**

A total of 200 dinners were cooked and packed by Holy Mother of Sorrows parishioners and United Community Volunteers. Dinners were delivered on Thanksgiving Day to the residents of the Housing for the Elderly in Dupont, Duryea, Pittston, West Pittston and Exeter, PA.



**Volunteers packing Thanksgiving dinners**



**Our Volunteers**



**Parishioners and Community Volunteers**

**Eastern Diocese****Christmas Message from the Bishop of the Eastern Diocese, P.N.C.C.****Rt. Rev. Paul Sobiechowski****The Meaning of Advent**

I write this article as we a few days before the end of the current ecclesiastical year and the beginning of a new one. This Sunday (November 23) we celebrate the Solemnity of Christ the King,, the final Sunday of the current year.

Then we observe the weekdays of the final week of Ordinary Time. This year the national observance of Thanksgiving will take place on the Thursday of this week.

A new ecclesiastical year begins with the Sunday, November 30th, the First Sunday of Advent. This day also happens to be the Feast of Saint Andrew the Apostle. Because of the occurrence (two holy observances sharing the same day) Saint Andrew's feast day is translated to Monday, December 1.

With the new season of Advent, the liturgical colors change from the Green of Ordinary Time to the Sarum Blue of Advent. A new cycle of Sunday readings begin (cycle A) as well as a new set of daily Mass readings (Year 2). At Holy Trinity Cathedral in Manchester we will bless the traditional Christmas Wafers, *Oplatki*. These are available to the faithful to share with loved ones on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day, or to place in Christmas cards that will be sent to family members and friends world-wide. The Advent Wreath will be present in our sanctuaries, with one candle being lit on the first Sunday, with additional candles lighted on the next three consecutive Sundays.

The four candles that will be lit represent *Hope, Faith, Joy and Peace*. A website that further explains the Advent Candle is <https://www.christianity.com/wiki/holidays/advent-wreath-meaning-of-advent-candles.html>.

There is an overall theme that envelops **Advent**. The word Advent comes from the Latin word *adventus*, which means "coming" or "arrival." It reminds us that we are waiting for someone very special who is Jesus Christ. During the Advent season of preparation, we remember two comings of Jesus. The Church calls us to 'prepare the way of the Lord' Isaiah 40:3. One aspect of the Advent season involves the preparation for and consideration of those events that culminated in Jesus' birth in the Bethlehem stable. A second aspect also prepares the individual Christ's second and final coming at which He will establish His everlasting kingdom and judge the living and the dead.

So how do we prepare? The Church provides us with an opportunity to join in liturgies that promote Advent. These include the lighting of the Advent Candle, the dressing of a Jesse Tree, participating in penitential services or retreats, the celebration of the seasonal Morning and Evening prayers.

"It is a Polish custom that a special votive Mass in honor of the Blessed Virgin Mary is celebrated in the parish church before daylight hours, once a week (usually on a Wednesday) at sunrise. It is called the "Rorate" Mass, from the first words of the Latin Isaiah 45:8. This unique Introit (Entrance Hymn) "*rorate caeli*" in Latin; "Shower o heavens..." This Polish custom, first celebrated at the Wawel Cathedral in Krakow in 1545 dictates that seven candles are lighted and placed on St. Mary's Altar. The seventh candle is much taller than the rest and is decorated with a green branch tied with a white ribbon. This symbolizes the Old Testament prophecy fulfilled, the Messiah stemming from the 'Root of Jesse.' Parishes may adjust the time of celebration of Rorate to maximize attendance of the faithful." (P.N.C.C. Rites & Ritual; A Liturgical Handbook for the Polish National Catholic Church)

Most importantly, our Advent preparation season is a sacred and transformative endeavor that calls one to cultivate a spirit of mindfulness, reverence, and anticipation. As the Advent season unfolds, one is invited to embark on a profound journey of spiritual preparation, aligning one's heart and mind with the timeless significance of Christ's birth and the promise of His second coming.

At the heart of preparing for the coming of Christ lies the practice of introspection and self-examination. This period prompts believers to engage in deep reflection, pondering the virtues of hope, faith, joy, and peace that Christ embodies.

The Advent season of preparation is a mix of both joyful and peaceful elements. We sing, decorate, and celebrate, but we also pause, pray, and remember the real reason behind it all. It's about finding balance: celebrating the light of Christ while waiting faithfully for His return.

Taking from what I wrote in the Messenger the last three winter issues ... "the year of 2025 posed many challenges and witnessed many achievements for our parishes and our diocese. What will 2026 bring? What challenges will we face and what joys will we experience as Eucharistic people in our Discipleship walk? Whatever these may be, we have the period of Advent to prepare ourselves. The following words are as true for us today, as they were in the time of Isaiah, "... *In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God.*" Isaiah 40:3.

May we all experience a truly spiritual preparation for the upcoming holidays.

Bishop Paul



## Eastern Diocese Clergy Retreat

Madison, CT

On November 12-13, 2025 the Eastern Diocese Clergy Retreat was held at Mercy by the Sea in Madison, CT. Fr. Sr. Charles Zawistowski, the Administrator of the Western Diocese, was the retreat master.



## Veterans' Dinner at Our Saviour Parish

Woonsocket, RI

On the evening of November 6<sup>th</sup>, Our Saviour Parish, Woonsocket, RI, held its annual Veterans dinner, serving over 90 veterans.

Thank you to everyone who helped make this another successful annual event, and a special thank you to Mr. Ed Nawrocki, the organizer of the event.



## Blessed Trinity Parish November Highlights

### Fall River, MA

Following Sunday Mass on November 9<sup>th</sup>, the Blessed Trinity Parish youth filled 50 Christmas boxes for Operation Christmas Child. The gifts were blessed on Sunday, November 16<sup>th</sup> after Holy Mass and then they were dropped off on Monday, November 17<sup>th</sup> to be distributed for Christmas to children living in poverty in Third World Countries. Thank you to everyone who helped and donated to this annual discipleship effort done in memory of + Bishop Stan (Bilinski)! Blessed to help others in the name of our Lord and Savior.

Sixteen turkeys were cooked and carved for the Fall River Veterans Kitchen Thanksgiving Luncheon on Wednesday, November 19<sup>th</sup>.



Another 24 turkeys were cooked and carved for the annual Fall River Thanksgiving Dinner for the local unsheltered citizens on November 20<sup>th</sup>.



We also helped Angels Anonymous offload food for their Thanksgiving food Pantry held on Sunday, November 23<sup>rd</sup>.

(Continued on Page 26.)



On Tuesday, November 11<sup>th</sup> - Veterans Day - Fr. Sr. Rob Nemkovich offered prayers at the Fall River Veterans monument in Kennedy Park to kick off the parade and the Invocation and Benediction at the ceremony that followed in Government Center. Many were honored for their service to veterans in Fall River at the ceremony. May God bless our Veterans, Fall River and America



(Blessed Trinity Parish November Highlights - Continued from Page 25.)

November 27<sup>th</sup> Amazing Thanksgiving serving 175 Turkey dinners at our Fall River Community Dinner after Holy Mass this morning. Blessed for so many joining us, so many volunteers and so many who supported/donated to this annual celebration giving Thanks to God and sharing a Thanksgiving meal with anyone in need or alone this day. Nice to have Mayor Coogan join us and glad to share meals with our FRPD, FRFD and the FAST team for those in encampments. So many blessings that we are so very THANKful for! Praise God from whom all blessings flow!



## Thanksgiving Dinner at Holy Name of Jesus Parish

So. Deerfield, MA

At Noon on Sunday, November 16<sup>th</sup>, Holy Name of Jesus Parish, So. Deerfield, MA, held its annual parish Thanksgiving Dinner at the Polish American Citizens Club in So. Deerfield. A wonderful Thanksgiving turkey with all the traditional sides was served to 100 people, with an additional 25 takeout dinners for those who preferred to enjoy them at home.

Thank you to all those who helped put together this delicious feast, and many thanks to everyone who attended the event.



**Western Diocese****Christmas Message from the Western Diocese****Very Rev. Charles Zawistowski, Diocesan Administrator***Glory to God in the Highest heaven! Luke 2:14a.*

I'm sure many have noticed that our Church refrains from reciting the Glory or Gloria during the season of Advent. If any are curious, they may wonder why.

Part of the answer is that one of the themes of Advent is preparation for remembering the birth of the Savior. One symbol of preparation is the absence of the Glory.

We see in the evangelist Luke's gospel (chapter 2) that this "Glory" follows an encounter with "the angel of the Lord" who appeared to shepherds. Though shepherds were known to be brave and tough, they were afraid when they saw the angel. The angel responded by saying "Do not be afraid; for see - I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people (Luke 2:10). That good news is the Savior would be born among them.

Soon after this encounter, a "multitude" of the heavenly host were praising God saying or singing "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom He favors! (Luke 2:14) So another part of the answer is that the Glory is truly a Christmas themed song, and most fitting that it first appears in the new Church year at Christmas.

Angels singing the Glory is one of the oldest images of the heavenly Kingdom, with God at His throne, the Apostles near by, and the angels close enough to hear them. On Christmas Day, may we proclaim with great joy - Glory to God in the Highest!

Wishing You a Blessed Christmas Season!

Very Rev. Charles Zawistowski Administrator of the Western Diocese

**All Souls at St. Mary's Parish****Parma, OH**

November was a month of devoted prayer at St. Mary's Parish in Parma, OH. Each Sunday morning Mass began with a recitation of submitted names of the departed members of the parish, as well as departed clergy from St. Mary's and bishops of the Polish National Catholic Church.

An All Souls Day service of remembrance was held on Sunday, November 2nd at 11am at the Sacred Heart of Jesus Cemetery. There, a service remembering departed parents, family, clergy, servicemen and women, and friends was held, with the graves of the departed subsequently blessed.

A month of public and private prayer concluded with Holy Mass celebrated on Tuesday, November 25th with the reading of the entire prayer list at the conclusion of Holy Mass. Thank you to all who submitted your loved ones for prayer— The entirety of the list is used throughout the year for prayer by the clergy.



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