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In the Desert this Lent

Most Rev. Anthony Mikovsky, Prime Bishop

On the first Sunday of Lent in this year, we hear from the Gospel of Saint Matthew concerning our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ in the desert.

Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. He fasted forty days and forty nights, and afterwards He was famished. The tempter came and said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread." But He answered, "It is written, 'One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"

Then the devil took Him to the holy city and placed Him on the pinnacle of the temple, saying to Him, "If You are the Son of God, throw yourself down; for it is written, 'He will command His angels concerning You,' and 'On their hands they will bear You up, so that You will not dash Your foot against a stone.'" Jesus said to him, "Again it is written, 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'"

Again, the devil took Him to a very high mountain and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor; and he said to Him, "All these I will give You, if You will fall down and worship me." Jesus said to him, "Away with you, Satan! For it is written, 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve only Him.'"

Then the devil left Him, and suddenly angels came and waited on Him. (Matthew 4:1-11)

We are oftentimes puzzled by this portion of the Gospel. We find it hard to believe that our Lord Je-

sus was tempted, or even that He allowed the temptation to go on for as long as it did. On the other hand, we are also comforted, knowing that our Lord was tempted as we are. St. Paul in fact tells us, "For we do not have a high priest Who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have One Who in every respect has been tested as we are, yet without sin." (Hebrews 4:15)

We remind ourselves as well that everything that is found within the Scriptures, the Word of God, is given there for our benefit in living a life in union with Christ. Therefore, we must approach these temptations of Jesus, seeking ways in which we can follow our Lord's lead in countering sin and evil.

First, we realize that for each temptation, the things that the devil offers are usually quite reasonable. He begins by noting that Jesus is hungry and follows with, "Why not have some bread?" But the real temptation is not just the bread, but the way in which it is obtained, and also the motivation behind why it should be pursued in that way. This shows us that in our daily lives while we can usually hold off the larger or more grievous sins, it is within the more mundane aspects of life where these temptations usually can trip us up.

Second, our Lord also shows a way to combat sin and temptation within our lives. While we certainly know that our Lord could have just sent the devil fleeing with a simple command, rather He relies on the Scriptures, the Word of God, to show the way. For each temptation, our Lord quotes Scripture to

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show us that when we rely on the ways that God has already laid out for us, we can use them to counter any temptation.

We can also ask the question, if Saint Paul said that Jesus was tested in “every way,” why are these three specific temptations presented to us within Matthew’s Gospel. I think that the lessons we can take from them are that they are indicative of many of the temptations that we each face every day on our journey of striving to live in faith.

In the first temptation, Jesus is tempted to turn stones into bread because He is hungry. The temptation is to take a shortcut and to rely on our agency or any power we have to meet our immediate selfish wants. The counter of our Lord is to rather concern ourselves with the ways and will of God, the “word that comes forth from the mouth of God,” to always be our guide.

The second temptation is to put God to the test, and moreover to create a spectacle. The devil, in essence, says to Jesus, “If You throw Yourself down and the angels catch You, everyone will see it and then, seeing the miracle, they will surely and easily follow You.” But again, the temptation is just a shortcut to winning the hearts and minds of other people. The answer of our Lord is again from Scripture, “Do not put the Lord your God to the test.” Rather it is through humble trust in the daily presence of God in our lives that will allow us to grow closer to Him every day and slowly win the hearts and minds of those who experience our goodness and love modeled on Christ.

Lastly the devil tempts Jesus with all the wealth in the world when he shows Jesus all the kingdoms and their splendor. The devil says, all that needs to be

done is to worship the controller of all that wealth, who is himself. Here the temptation is to look for security and influence through things rather than look to the Creator of all things, God Almighty. Again, the answer of Jesus is telling, “Worship the Lord your God, and serve only Him.” If we are serving anything else, besides God, we are on the wrong road.

These would seem to be the temptations that afflict each of us almost every day of our lives. We sometimes seek to only be selfish and use our power to meet our own needs without considering the ways of God and the needs of others. We also sometimes seek to have others think well of us because of the things that we do. We forget that we are only to follow Christ and His ways of love and sacrifice for others. Or we sometimes look for wealth, or control, or power or prestige in our lives, setting them up as idols that we strive for and worship. We divert our effort and our attention away from God and focus on other selfish things.

The temptations of Jesus in the desert are our temptations in the journey of our daily lives. During this season of Lent, I encourage each and every one of you to spiritually spend some time with our Lord in the desert. While there, confront the temptations that you deal with on a daily basis. And then with the help of our Lord, Who is present to us, in the Sacrament of Penance, in the Sacrament of God’s Word, and in the Sacrament of the Altar, the Eucharist, to say to your temptations and sins, “away with you,” just as Jesus did. If we rely on His strength and not on our own way through life, we will certainly participate fully in Jesus’ life and ministry, and then, at the conclusion of this Lenten time, we will also fully be united to Him in the Resurrection.



XXVII General Synod

Proposed Agenda and Program

In accord with the Constitution, By-Laws and Code of Faith of the Polish National Catholic Church, the Proposed Agenda of the XXVII General Synod, to be held within the Eastern Diocese on September 28-30, 2026 is hereby published. The Synod will begin with the celebration of Holy Mass and then the Synod will endeavor to enter into its work.

1. Greetings and Overview
2. Appointments of the Synodal Committees for the XXVII General Synod
3. Report of the Mandate Committee
 - a. Oath of Delegates
4. Acceptance of the Minutes of the XXVI General Synod
5. Report of the Rules & Regulations Committee
6. Report of the Agenda Committee
7. Election of Candidates for Bishop
 - a. Report of the Nominations Commission
 - b. Election
8. Election of the Prime Bishop
9. Report of the Prime Bishop
10. Reports of the Diocesan Bishops
 - a. Buffalo-Pittsburgh Diocese
 - b. Canadian Diocese
 - c. Central Diocese
 - d. Eastern Diocese
 - e. Western Diocese
11. Reports of the Standing Commissions
 - a. History & Archives Commission
 - b. National Commission on Liturgy
 - c. Church Doctrine Commission
 - d. National Scouting Commission
 - e. National School of Christian Living
 - f. Sacred Vocations Commission
 - g. Mission & Evangelism Commission
 - h. Clergy Salary and Benefits Commission
 - i. National Youth Commission
12. Reports of the Standing Organizations
 - a. National Women's Societies for the Adoration of the Most Blessed Sacrament
 - b. National United Choirs
 - i. General Report
 - ii. Music Commission Report
 - iii. Music Scholarship Report
 - c. National Young Men's Societies of Resurrection
 - d. National United Youth Association
 - i. Youth Representative
 - ii. National Youth Chaplain
 - iii. Convo Reports
13. Financial Matters of the Church
 - a. Report of the Investment Committee
 - b. Report of the Church Treasurer

- c. Report of the Audit Committee
- d. Report of the Budget and Finance Commission
- 14. Report of Spójnia, Inc.
- 15. Report of the Clergy Pension Fund
- 16. Report of the Clergy Hospitalization Fund
- 17. Report concerning the merger of the Polish National Union
 - a. Polish National Alliance
 - b. Spójnia Credit Union
- 18. Report of Savonarola Theological Seminary
- 19. Dialogue and Ecumenical Reports
 - a. Polish National Catholic – Roman Catholic Dialogue
 - b. Polish National Catholic – Anglican (G2) Dialogue
 - c. Report on the Union of Scranton
 - d. Report of the Ecumenical Officer
- 20. Diocesan Caucuses and Elections
- 21. Report of the Constitution Commission
 - a. Constitutional Changes
- 22. Report on God’s Field
- 23. Report on the P.N.C.C. Website
- 24. Report on the National Church Center
- 25. Report on the Prime Bishop Residence
- 26. New Business
 - a. Naming of the Synodal Commissions and Appointments
- 27. Adjournment of the Synod

While this is a general layout of the reports to be covered at the Synod, this Agenda still needs to be accepted by the Synod body. It may also be adjusted for time considerations as it is planned to deal with some of the longer items at points when the needed time can be allotted to them.

Along with this Agenda we also plan to review and strive to expand the work that has been ongoing in the Church since the start of the Future Direction Program three synods ago. There five major areas of consideration were identified and we will look for ways to continue to expand them. These are: 1) Growth and membership, 2) Increased Spirituality, 3) Lifelong Learning, 4) Sacred Vocations, and 5) Community Involvement and Presence. Please discuss these items for the input of your parish membership and bring your ideas to the Synod.

Synodal Commissions

At each General Synod the membership of the National Commissions is set for the following four-year period. Names are sought during the Synod and submitted to the Prime Bishop with volunteers usually taken from the Synod delegates. At the conclusion of the Synod, the Prime Bishop then presents these individuals to the Synodal Body for its confirmation. Although it is often only Synod delegates who become members of these Commissions, this is not required.

Anyone who is interested in working to help the Church on a Synodal Commission may submit their names. Those submissions will be evaluated by the Prime Bishop then presentation will be made to the General Synod for approval. The list of National Commission is: 1) Constitution, 2) Mission and Evangelism, Budget and Finance, 4) School of Christian Living, 5) Liturgy, 6) Church Doctrine, 7) Clergy Salary and Benefits, 8) History and Archives, and 9) Sacred Vocations. A National Youth Commission was also appointed at the last Synod.

Please consider if your talents may help the Church in serving on one of these Commissions. Names may be submitted to the Office of the Prime Bishop, 1006 Pittston Avenue, Scranton, PA 18505 or pbmikovsky@pncc.org.

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Forty Years of Dialogue

In 2024, the Polish National Catholic Church and the Roman Catholic Church honored the milestone of forty years of dialogue between our Churches. The Dialogue officially began with its first formal meeting on October 23, 1984 and has continued to meet regularly ever since.

In celebration of this milestone of dialogue, the Polish National Catholic – Roman Catholic Dialogue Commission authored a joint statement entitled, “On Unity and the Eucharist.” This statement was finalized at the 2025 Dialogue Meeting held in Scranton, Pennsylvania. This statement has been approved for release and publication by the Bishops of the Polish National Catholic Church and the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.

On Unity and the Eucharist:

A Joint Statement on the 40th Anniversary of Dialogue between the Roman Catholic Church and the Polish National Catholic Church

With gratitude to Almighty God, the Roman Catholic Church and the Polish National Catholic Church acknowledge the movement of the Holy Spirit in our respective communities and the four decades of fruitful dialogue. This dialogue has allowed our faithful to rediscover one another increasingly as brothers and sisters in the Lord, particularly following the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) and a similar renewal within the Polish National Catholic Church. We affirm our shared understanding of the Holy Eucharist as central to the life of the Church and recognize the profound spiritual bond that unites us in Christ Jesus and the substantial agreement we hold concerning the mystery of the Lord's Supper.

This journey of dialogue between our Churches began as far back as 1966, when the Most Rev. Leon Grochowski, Prime Bishop of the Polish National Catholic Church, proposed such a dialogue to the Roman Catholic Bishop of Scranton, the Most Rev. Joseph Carroll McCormick. Later, in 1980, Pope John Paul II expressed the desire that the conference of bishops of the United States examine the relationship with the Polish National Catholic Church and explore the possibility of dialogue. This led to an exchange of correspondence between our church leaders, culminating in the first official dialogue meeting in Passaic, New Jersey, on October 23, 1984.

The establishment of our dialogue was somewhat delayed compared to other ecumenical dialogues that began in the 1960s and 1970s. This was due to the particularly painful history of our relationship and the circumstances surrounding the origins of the Polish National Catholic Church among ethnic Polish and other Roman Catholics in the United States in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. We now realize that the disputes of that time were more focused on matters of church governance than doctrinal disagreements. However, the complicated series of events that led to our division caused significant hurt and anguish, even within families, and the consequences of those events are still felt within our midst today.

In the spirit of healing and reconciliation, several symbolic gestures have taken place, most notably the Service of Healing at St. Stanislaus Polish National Catholic Cathedral in Scranton, Pennsylvania, on February 15, 1992. Leaders from both Churches, including Cardinal Edward I. Cassidy, Prime Bishop John F. Swantek, and the dialogue co-chairmen, Bishop Stanislaus J. Brzana and Bishop Anthony M. Rysz, asked for forgiveness and pledged to work towards overcoming our divisions definitively. In 1997, Bishop James C. Timlin, the Roman Catholic Co-Chairman of the dialogue, reiterated this request for forgiveness in a letter marking the centenary of the organization of the Polish National Catholic Church.

Our dialogue has yielded significant progress. In a 1989 report, we affirmed our agreement on the seven sacraments of the Church, despite some differences in practice that do not affect our fundamental common faith. The 2003 report, which detailed developments in our dialogue from 1989 to 2002, highlighted the progress made and the concrete steps taken.

In response to an inquiry from the Archbishop of Baltimore, His Excellency William Keeler, then President of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, His Eminence Edward Cardinal Cassidy, President of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, stated in 1993 that members of the Polish National Catholic Church in the United States and Canada may receive the sacraments of Penance, Holy Communion, and Anointing of the Sick from Roman Catholic priests. This is permissible if they request them on their own, are properly disposed, and are not otherwise excluded from the sacraments according to canon law. Subsequently, in 1996, Archbishop Oscar H. Lipscomb provided further details on the conditions for Polish National Catholics to receive these sacraments in the Roman Catholic Church. In 1998, the Polish National Catholic Church issued Guidelines for the Reception by Polish National Catholics of Sacraments in the Roman Catholic Church. Canon law also specifies the conditions under which Roman Catholics may receive sacraments in the Polish National Catholic Church.

Building upon these inquiries and declarations, we indeed celebrate shared statements on the Eucharist:

- **The Real Presence:** We believe that in the celebration of the Eucharist, through the power of the Holy Spirit and the words of Christ, the bread and wine become the true Body and Blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. This presence is not merely symbolic but a reality, with the priest offering this sacrifice in the Celebration of Holy Mass *in Persona Christi*. This serves our collective and respective belief in the Eucharist as the “true central point of Catholic Worship” as well as the “Source and Summit of the Christian Life”.
- **Sacramental Reality:** We affirm the Eucharist as a true sacrament, instituted by Christ Himself at the Last Supper, for the nourishment of the faithful and the building up of His Body, the Church.
- **Eucharist as Sacrifice:** We both understand the Eucharist as the memorial of Christ’s sacrifice on the Cross, making present the one perfect and eternal sacrifice for the forgiveness of sins. While our liturgical expressions may differ, the fundamental understanding of the sacrificial nature of the Mass unites us.
- **Communion:** We agree that the reception of Holy Communion is a profound act of union with Christ and with the Church. It strengthens the believer in grace and commits us to a life of love and service.
- **Effects of the Eucharist:** We agree that the effects of the Eucharist reflect Jesus’ teaching in the sixth chapter of John’s Gospel: that this Bread “gives life to the world” (John 6:33); that “whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty” (John 6:35); that “I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats of this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh” (John 6:50-51); that “Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood have eternal life, and I will raise them up on the last day, for my flesh is true food and my blood is true drink” (John 6:54-55); and that “This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like that which your ancestors ate, and they died. But the one who eats this bread will live forever” (John 6:58).
- **Validity of Sacraments:** Each of our respective faith communities, by virtue of a true and unbroken Apostolic Succession, acknowledge the validity of the sacraments offered in each respective Church.

These concrete statements and steps towards unity give us much for which to be thankful. We recognize each other’s ecclesial character and sacraments, allow a degree of sacramental sharing, and maintain many shared traditions, demonstrating our rediscovered common heritage. Our mutual respect precludes inappropriate actions such as proselytism or the re-ordination of clergy transferring from one Church to the other.

However, our century-long division has led to divergences that present challenges to reconciliation. The Polish National Catholic Church, having been a member of the Union of Utrecht for much of its history, has developed a strong sense of autonomy and a desire to preserve its distinct traditions, including the vital role of the laity in church governance. While the primacy and infallibility of the Bishop of Rome was not a point of contention at the time of our division, our Churches today hold different understandings of the Pope’s role in the church. The presence of a significant number of former Roman Catholic priests within the Polish National

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Catholic clergy further complicates the situation.

Despite these challenges, we, the members of the Polish National Catholic – Roman Catholic dialogue, reaffirm our commitment to overcoming our remaining divisions and declare that our goal is full communion between our Churches. We emphasize that “full communion” does not imply absorption or uniformity but a unity that fully recognizes differing traditions consistent with our shared apostolic faith.

It remains to be determined whether any of our divergent traditions are truly church-dividing or simply examples of legitimate diversity, which, in the words of Pope John Paul II, “is in no way opposed to the Church’s unity, but rather enhances her splendor and contributes greatly to the fulfillment of her mission” (*Ut Unum Sint*, n. 50).

To achieve this fuller unity, we commit ourselves to:

- **Continued Dialogue:** To further explore any remaining theological or liturgical differences in the understanding and celebration of the Eucharist, with the goal of deeper convergence. This includes a thorough examination and understanding of the theological and ecclesiological concepts of papal primacy and conciliarity.
- **Teaching the Faithful:** To build up understanding of the Eucharist through Scripture and Sacred Tradition, echoing the desire of Patristic Fathers like Augustine, who explained, “That bread which you see on the altar, having been sanctified by the word of God, is the body of Christ. That chalice, or rather, what is in that chalice, having been sanctified by the word of God, is the blood of Christ” (Sermons 227 [A.D. 411]).
- **Prayer for Unity:** To earnestly pray for the full and visible unity of our Churches, that we may together more perfectly reflect the prayer of our Lord: “that they may all be one” (John 17:21).

We plan to give further consideration to other concrete steps, namely those which resolve questions affecting reciprocity in the sacraments, in particular the requirements of godparents and the matter of lawfulness in following canonical form in mixed marriage as experienced by the faithful of our Churches.

While acknowledging that full communion is the ultimate goal of our dialogue, this statement and our shared expounding upon the Eucharist represent a significant step forward in recognizing the deep unity we already share in this Most Holy Sacrament. As members of a commission authorized to engage in this ecumenical dialogue, our role is not to speak definitively for either of our Churches. Nevertheless, we hope to propose new incremental steps that will make concrete the growing unity between us, and we wish our faithful to know our conviction that a way can be found to overcome this regrettable division that took place among our Catholic forebears here in the United States.

We pray that the Holy Spirit, who allows us to see Scripture with a new set of eyes, will continue to guide us on the path towards the complete unity for which Christ prayed, allowing us to share fully at the Lord’s Table. We know that the goal of unity is nothing less than the will of Christ for us. Therefore, we ask the faithful of both our Churches to join us in fervent prayer that, with a new outpouring of the Holy Spirit, that further collaborative practices and joys may be shared, and we will one day soon find ourselves joined again in that perfect unity that befits the disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Scranton, Pennsylvania
May 21, 2025

Published Reports of the Polish National Catholic – Roman Catholic Dialogue

Journeying Together in Christ: The Report of the Polish National Catholic – Roman Catholic Dialogue (1984-1989). Edited by Stanislaus J. Brzana and Anthony M. Rysz. Huntington, Indiana: Our Sunday Visitor Publishing Division, 1990.

Journeying Together in Christ: The Journey Continues. The Report of the Polish National Catholic – Roman Catholic Dialogue 1989-2002. Edited by Most Rev. Robert M. Nemkovich and Most Rev. James C. Timlin. Huntington, Indiana: Our Sunday Visitor Publishing Division, 2003.

Theological Conference of the Union of Scranton

Mainz, GE

The Theological Conference of the Union of Scranton was held in Mainz, GE from January 29th through February 1st. The theme of this year's conference was "Lex orandi lex credenda" (the law of what is prayed [is] the law of what is believed).



Most Rev. Anthony Mikovsky, Prime Bishop of the Polish National Catholic Church, and Very Rev. Robert M. Nemkovich, Jr., Secretary General of the Union of Scranton and Ecumenical Officer of the P.N.C.C., attended the conference. During the afternoon of the first full day of the conference Fr. Sr. Nemkovich presented "The Liturgical History and Life of the Polish National Catholic Church" to the attendees.

Other presentations at the conference included: "Lex orandi lex credendi in the theology of Alexander Schmemmann" given by Iver Denis-Petrie (NO), MA Theological Studies; "Prayer and faith as a challenge in a post-confessional situation" by Prof. em. Dr. Reinhard Thöle, Universität Halle-Wittenberg (GER); "Treasures of early Christian liturgy" by Prof. Dr. Hans Jürgen Feulner, University of Vienna (AU); "The way forward – ecumenical visions" (a plenary discussion moderated by Bishop Ottar Mikael Myrseth).



On January 31st, Holy Mass at St. Martin's Cathedral was celebrated by Prime Bishop Mikovsky. Concelebrants were Very Rev. Nemkovich and Bishop Myrseth.

The conference concluded on Sunday, February 1st with Holy Mass celebrated by Bishop Myrseth. Following the Mass candles were blessed in anticipation of Candlemass Day on February 2nd.

United Young Men's Society of Resurrection Winter Clothing Drive 2025

In what has now become one of the United Y.M.S. of R.'s biggest endeavors, and a sign of generosity and good faith by the people of the Polish National Catholic Church, the organization once again held its Winter Clothing Drive to donate to a local charitable organization in their home area.

All Y.M.S. of R. branches and P.N.C.C. parishes collected various pieces of clothing over the past couple of months- such as coats, sweatshirts, shirts, pants, hats, gloves, and more- and to tally up the final results at the end of the drive. The top three parishes who collected the most clothes, will receive a gift from the United Y.M.S. of R. board to be used as a social function for their church.

The parishes were asked to deliver, and as always they came through thousands of clothing items collected for donations. We are aware of other parishes who had clothing drives around the same times as ours and have for decades. The United Y.M.S. of R. wants to thank them for all the work done for their communities and for continuing on the good deeds and faith of the P.N.C.C.

St. Mary's Parish of Parma, Ohio took home the championship bringing in 2,067 total items. The parish has truly created a dynasty when it comes to this event, and the United Y.M.S. of R. thanks them for their enthusiastic presentation every year. Holy Mother of Sorrows Parish in Dupont, PA took second place this year with 793 items collected, and Holy Name of Jesus Parish in Schenectady, NY was third bringing in 567 items. Congratulations to Fr. Jason Soltysiak, Fr. Sr. Zbigniew Dawid and Fr. Jim Konicki and all the parishioners of those three parishes for going above and beyond the call of duty.

A huge thank you to all of the pastors and parish administrators who advertised this event throughout their churches, and a bigger thank you to anyone who donated. Your generosity continues to be amazing and all communities are better because of it.

Kevin McConlogue United Y.M.S. of R. - Public Relations Director

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Nomination of Candidates for Bishop

At this upcoming XXVII General Synod an election for Candidates for Bishop will be held. The Prime Bishop together with the Supreme Council has decided that the Synod will seek to elect three (3) candidates. Nominations are now being accepted by the Office of the Prime Bishop, 1006 Pittston Avenue, Scranton, PA 18505. They will be accepted until May 1, 2026.

A Nominations Commission will be chosen in the future to evaluate the nominees in accordance with the Constitution, By-Laws and Code of Faith of the Polish National Catholic Church and the Guidelines accepted by the Doctrine Commission, the Bishops, and the Supreme Council.

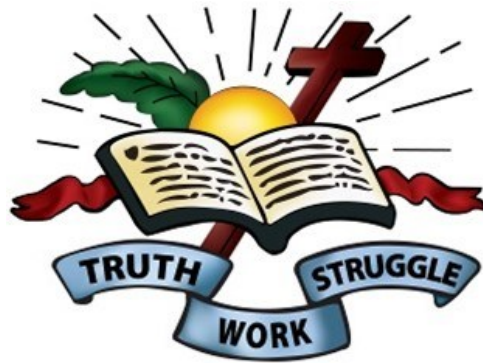
Constitutional Amendments

According to Article XXI of the Constitution, By-Laws and Code of Faith of the Polish National Catholic Church amendments must be submitted at least six (6) months prior to the start of the General Synod. As the Synod is slated to begin on September 28, 2026, amendments must be received within the Office of the Prime Bishop by March 28, 2026.

As a conclusion I ask that we each join in prayer that the upcoming XXVII General Synod will be a spiritual success for the Church and that through it, its work and its plans, the entire Polish National Catholic Church may continue to better serve our Lord Jesus Christ and build up His Kingdom of earth.

Prayer for the Church

Almighty and eternal God, You have called us to serve You through the Polish National Catholic Church. Hear our prayer for the Prime Bishop, the Bishops: John, Paul, Bernard and Robert, the priests, the deacons, the lay leaders and the faithful of our Holy Church. May Your gifts and blessings strengthen our resolve to serve You and by our example bring others into the Mystical Body of Christ. May all that we do be for the glory of Your Name and the salvation of Your people. By our faithful witness and service may we eventually be received into Your eternal Kingdom. We ask this through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.



NOTICE TO PARISHES

If your parish is in need of financial assistance and you seek to request Clergy Aid from the Polish National Catholic Church, you must follow the procedures as outlined by the XIX General Synod.

All individual parish requests must be sent through the proper Diocesan Bishop or Administrator as soon as possible before **March 20, 2026, along with all of the required supporting financial documentation.**

The Diocesan Bishops/Administrator must forward all parish requests to the Office of the Prime Bishop no later than March 27, 2026.

PLEASE NOTE: Only Canadian Diocese submissions can be sent to the Office of the Prime Bishop. Requests sent by other diocesan parishes directly to the Office of the Prime Bishop and not through the proper Diocesan Bishop/Administrator Office will be returned to the parish. This may result in delayed paperwork and missed deadline submission.)

Prayer for the Unity of the Church

(From A Book of Devotions and Prayers Polish National Catholic Church)

O Lord Jesus Christ, before Your passion and death You prayed to Your Father for the Apostles “so that they may be one, even as We are one ... so that the world may know that You have sent Me and have loved them even as You have loved Me.” Reveal to the members of Your Church the peace, love and unity that comes through living in accordance with Your Word. Good Shepherd, lead us and make us one flock, for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.





The Month of Love

Rev. Jim Konicki, National Vocations Director

We offer you the Savonarola Theological Seminary Newsletter for February 2026 focused on love.

The Month of Love, I use that in my parish for our annual Valentine's raffle. It also sounds like a bad commercial for a honeymoon resort in the Poconos or in Niagara Falls. Kitschy as it is, the month and Valentine's Day does cause us to stop, and at least for a moment, focus on love.

In preparing for the month, I asked our seminarians to write on any one of the following subjects: (a) an understanding of what marital love is or (b) what love between brothers and sisters is or (c) what Christ's call to love entails. Each of these ways of understanding love is important for us as Christians.

In each aspect there is a key linking concept, the totality of how we love. Love brings questions, but of what kind? Our questions might be: Does he or she love me? Do they appreciate me? Do they know how much I am sacrificing for them? Those are I and me centered questions as are most. The difference is that they are inwardly focused. The center of the question and its focus is on what I am getting.

The beautiful part of love in Christ is that our love is not inward, because we know and trust that Jesus has us covered. We are secure in His love. As such our love in Christ is outward, self-giving, and without condition, reservation, or cost. Its focus is on what I am giving. We are to give love away just as Jesus did in coming for us, setting aside all that heaven entails, and sacrificing totally for us. So we are to do for the other.

As we begin this month of love our Holy Church enters the Pre-Lenten season and the vestment colors turn to rose. Rather fitting. In this time of reflection and preparation for the Great and Holy Lent let us turn our questions outward: Did I love the other? Did I appreciate and sacrifice for the other? Did I give my love without expectation or cost? Did I allow any excuse or any thought to block my love? Did fear of loss get in the way of my love? Do I love Jesus enough to trust that His love has me covered for now and eternally?

As we focus on the other and work to love resolutely, we will find something amazing happening in our lives. The love of God will be poured out from heaven upon us, and we will be filled with a peace that is heavenly.

Men, are you ready to engage in deep sacrificial love and in turn be blessed abundantly? Step forward to be that representation of love the Church's people need. Come and see how you as a priest or deacon can offer God's love.

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



We have established a prayer line for the seminary. Send your prayer requests by E-mail to 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!

Love: Christ's Call for His Church

Cleric Joel Smith

In the heart of Catholic faith is a powerful call: to love as Christ loved. This isn't just about feelings or fleeting emotions — it requires a fundamental shift in how we live, how we relate to others, and how we see our purpose as believers.

Christ's love, as the Church teaches, is agape — selfless, sacrificial, and universal. It's the love shown on Calvary, where Jesus gave his life for humanity's salvation. For Catholics, this isn't just a historical event to remember but a model for authentic living. When Christ tells us to "love your neighbor as yourself" (Matthew 22:39), he's inviting us into his own self-giving love. The Church sees this love as demanding our whole selves: mind, heart, will, and body.

This understanding carries deep implications. True Christian love, according to Catholic teaching is not limited to those we naturally like or who benefit us. It extends to the poor, the stranger, the enemy, and the difficult people in our lives. It calls us to see Christ in everyone, made in God's image. This shift changes how we view charity, justice, and mercy — love and action go hand in hand, like feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, and visiting/caring for the sick and infirm (Matthew 25:34-36). The Church reminds us that faith without works is dead; love without sacrifice is hollow.

But love also has an internal side. Through prayer, the sacraments, and reflection, Catholics are called to deepen their union with Christ, the source of love. The Eucharist renews Christ's sacrifice within us. Confession helps us recover when we fall short. This spiritual strength supports the outward expression of our faith. The call to love is also personal — for spouses, children, family, and community. These aren't distractions from universal love but its expression. Marriage becomes a sacrament, a sign and instrument of Christ's love with the Church. Parenthood is a sacred trust. Friendship becomes a path to holiness.

In a world that often feels fragmented, the Church's view of love offers wise, countercultural wisdom. It teaches that love isn't just a feeling but a commitment. It's not just private but public — a witness to the world. It urges Catholics to build a civilization of love, where justice flows from mercy, the vulnerable are protected, and Christ's presence changes human relationships. Embracing this call means accepting both joy and sacrifice. It involves dying to self-interest and discovering deeper purpose. And slowly, imperfectly, becoming more like Christ — love incarnate.

What's Love Got to Do with It?

Cleric Jon Johnson

February is here, and we turn our minds to Valentine's Day. I mean, you can't help it, the Valentine's decorations and cards are out the day after Christmas. Folks are busy thinking of the perfect gift for their sweethearts. Perhaps somewhere nice for dinner? But do we expect these things and are they really love?

St. Valentine, even though the day bears his name, is sadly forgotten. Valentine was a 3rd^d century Bishop, who live in Rome. He was imprisoned by the Emperor Claudius II for secretly marrying Christian couples when the Emperor had forbidden marriage for young men at that time, thinking that they made better soldiers. Valentine was imprisoned, and there he healed and restored the sight of the daughter of his jailer, named Julia, who had been blind from birth. Before he was led off to his martyrdom, he left Julia a note that was signed, "from your Valentine." Poor St. Valentine was beaten, stoned, and then, because he still survived, was beheaded. Valentine is patron not only of love, but also of engaged couples, happy marriages, beekeepers (because of his association with sweetness), Epilepsy (due to miraculous accounts of healing from the disease), greetings, travelers, young people and even the Plague, due to his intercession.

You may have seen the memes on social media poking fun about how we observe Valentine's Day. One of my favorites, reads: "St. Valentine was eventually imprisoned, beaten, stoned, and beheaded. Hallmark doesn't tell you that."

So if Valentine died such a horrific death, what's love got to do with it? Quite simply, St. Valentine not only lived a life of love, he died as a martyr, willingly giving his life out of love for God.

Our society today really has the wrong idea of love. Your turn on the T.V. and you see and hear strange ideas of love. I won't get into the details; you get the picture. You turn on the radio and everyone seems to be sing-

(Continued on Page 14.)

(The Savonarola Theological Seminary Newsletter.- Continued from Page 13.)

ing about love, but is it really love? All these folks seem pretty miserable. What we really hear and see is not love at all, in many cases, it's the opposite, it's lust. So what's missing? Quite simply, God. To be more precise, they have not heard or refuse to hear God's call to love. God's love changes lives!

The Pre-Lenten season starts out by telling us how God calls us to love Him. The Tract that we hear on Septuagesima from John 14:15 reminds us, "If you love me, you will keep my commands." But then, in the Gospel reading we hear from Matthew, chapter 5:17-37, Our Lord tells us to keep his commands are not enough. We must have TRUE love for Him, which comes with a conversion of our hearts and minds.

In Lent, we are called to fasting, penance, almsgiving. But, as Our Lord reminds us, it is not enough to obey these laws, but we must also do so out of love. This is God's call to love to us.

Lent in itself is not only a season of reflection and discipline and abstinence, but it is an entire season of love. In the Stations of the Cross, we see the love Christ had for us. In the Bitter Lamentations, we sing not only of the Passion of Our Lord and the sorrows of the Blessed Virgin Mary, but also of her love for her Son and His love for us. This whole of Lent, Christ reminds us of His passion and death out of love for us. May we take this to heart and truly love others as Christ calls us to be His light in the world.

Cross of Compassion, Cross of salvation,
Cross of all wisdom, cross of love.
He who would seek thee, love thee and know thee,
He shall find guidance, from above.
-from the hymn, W Krzyżu Cierpienie

Christ's Love: It's This Whole Other Country

Cleric David Dudzinski

What does Christ's call to love entail? I think in today's world the word "love" can mean many different things. Maybe spending time with somebody, people consider that love. Maybe really liking something, like my love of pierogi. Maybe even wanting something to grow and prosper, like the love we have for our Church. Sure, all of these are forms of love, but they are not particularly *Christ's* love.

For me, Christ's love, especially to other people, entails wanting the best for someone and willing to sacrifice for them. If necessary to even lay down my life for them! Christ did this exact thing when he went to the Cross. He could have said "I want the best for them" and left it at that, but He showed His love for us when He died for our sins. This is true love, brothers and sisters, and while not every relationship requires us to lay down our lives, we should be ready to give that much, because Christ did it for us!

C.S. Lewis and St. Augustine on the Ordering of Christian Love

Cleric Todd Godwin

As many of you are likely aware, in his book *The Four Loves* C.S. Lewis looks at four Greek words for love. These are:

στοργή (storgē) – natural affection (family bonds)
φιλία (philia) – friendship
ἔρως (erōs) – romantic/sexual love
ἀγάπη (agapē) – charitable, self-giving love

And while Lewis's theological insight is sound, i.e. that these are genuinely distinct modes of loving that matter morally and spiritually in ancient Greek and koine Greek. Where many commentators with good Greek skills have pushed back against Lewis is on the linguistic claim that the New Testament (NT) uses these words in clean, technical, non-overlapping ways.

While it is true linguistically that ancient and koine Greek have multiple words for love, and perhaps a richer love vocabulary than modern English (though this too is debatable), the New Testament does use these words in rigid categories and without overlap. For example, ἀγάπη (agape), very common in the NT, especially in John and Paul, is often associated with God's love. But in wider Greek it can mean preference, esteem, or even affection without moral depth. While it is elevated in Christian usage, it is not inherently "divine" by nature. φιλία / φιλέω (philia / phileō), used for friendship and affection, is also used for God's love in the NT

(e.g., John 16:27: the Father loves [φιλεῖ] you). So, it cannot simply mean “lesser” or “merely human” love. ἔρωσ (erōs), not used at all in the New Testament, though common in Plato and later Greek philosophy, is absent in the NT but reflects cultural and rhetorical choices, not a rejection of erotic love as such. A classic test case is John 21 (Peter’s restoration). This passage is often used to claim a sharp distinction between ἀγαπᾷς με and φιλεῖς με. Most contemporary Greek scholars agree that John uses stylistic variation, but not a carefully staged hierarchy of love-types. John frequently alternates synonyms elsewhere (e.g., “sheep/lambs,” “know/understand,” “feed/tend”). So the passage cannot bear the theological weight often placed on it.

We need to remember that Lewis was not doing technical lexicography. He was drawing on classical Greek categories and using them as moral and spiritual lenses. But he was not claiming NT authors followed a strict dictionary scheme. We must be careful not to make Lewis into a straw man and make him say things he was not actually saying.

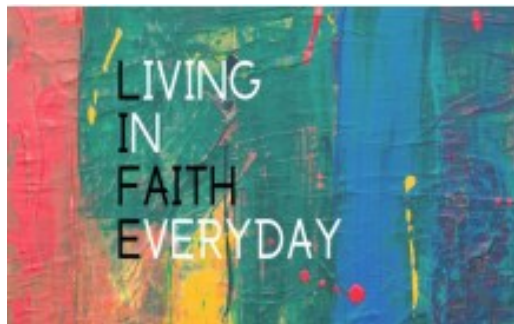
One way of avoiding the lexical approach to the ordering of love in the bible is to compare Lewis with St. Augustine and his famous ordering of loves. Augustine’s framework is amor, caritas, and cupiditas. Amor is the most general term: simply “love,” and is morally neutral, and is for Augustine defined by its object and its order. Amor meus, pondus meum — “My love is my weight” (Conf. 13.9). Love is what moves the soul. The question is not whether we love, but what we love and how. Caritas is properly ordered love. Love of God and neighbor in God. Ultimately grounded in God’s own love poured into the heart (Rom 5:5). Caritas is not merely altruism; it is participation in divine love that reorders all other loves. Cupiditas is disordered love. It is love that clings to mutable goods as ends, and is not necessarily sexual, but is often so; it includes ambition, pride, domination.

What is crucial here is that Augustine does not oppose sexual love to spiritual love. He opposes ordered to disordered desire and distinguishes directions and order of love. For Augustine, eros can be caritas if ordered to God. Friendship can be cupiditas if it replaces God. Family affection can damn or save, depending on order. Augustine anticipates the NT lexical problem because Augustine is not relying on Greek vocabulary. He does not assume agapē is inherently divine and does not need to force distinctions where Scripture does not. He reads Scripture as teaching not different loves, but different orientations of love. This aligns better with how agapē and philia actually function in the NT.

Drawing on Platonism (via Plotinus), Augustine assumes all beings desire the good, and that love is a kind of motion toward rest; and sin is misdirected motion. To love wrongly therefor is to move towards non-being. To love rightly is to ascend toward Being itself (God). This is why Augustine can say, with Origen and Athanasius and other key Fathers, that evil is privation: disordered love leads toward nothingness; and ordered love leads toward rest (requies).

Looking at John 21 once again, Augustine would ask: is Peter’s love ordered toward Christ? Where some modern interpreters parse agapāō vs phileō, Augustine would ask: Is Peter’s love ordered toward Christ? Does it move him toward obedience and humility? And we can safely assume that it does. So as we move into February, our month of love which has very little to do with the Roman Christian saint whose name we have stolen for our February 14th holiday, let us remember that any type of love that seeks to limit or hold for oneself rather than honor the other and serve God in doing so, is a disordered love that should be abandoned.





Living in Faith Every Day
25th National Mission and Evangelism Workshop
Polish National Catholic Church
Friday, May 29 – Sunday, May 31, 2026

Dear Most Rev. Prime Bishop, Rt. Rev. Bishops, very Rev. and Rev. Fathers, Deacons, and Faithful of the Polish National Catholic Church.

We invite you to the 25th Mission and Evangelism Workshop, which will be held from **Friday, May 29 through Sunday, May 31, 2026**, at **St. Joseph's Parish of the PNCC in Westfield, MA**. We hope to see you there. Our goal for each Mission Workshop is that the faithful come away with a burning desire to bring the faith-driven work of the Workshop back to their parishes. Please consider participating in this event. Our hotel accommodation is at the **Hampton Inn Westfield**, 39 Southampton Road, Westfield, MA 01085.

The following information is necessary for you to attend:

1. Workshop Pamphlet – Schedule, names, phone numbers and email addresses you may need.
2. Workshop Registration Form

(Please make copies if necessary and distribute them to others.)

Each participant is responsible for their own hotel reservations and confirmations. Each participant needs to call the hotel directly for room reservations. Please use the hotel code 904 when making reservations. To make your reservation, contact the hotel directly at (413) 564-6900. The cut off deadline date for obtaining the guaranteed room rate of 9 double queens, \$149.00, 7 Kings, \$149.00 plus tax is **Wednesday, April 29, 2026**.

Please fill out the registration forms and send it to:

25th Mission Workshop
c/o Sue Dibrindisi
42 Stone Ridge Drive
Florence, MA 01062

The registration fee is waived for more to attend and keep the costs low. **The deadline for registration is Wednesday, April 29, 2026.** Please make your reservations before this date, so that St. Joseph's Parish can adequately prepare.

Our outreach to the local community will be in support of the local charity, **the Open Pantry**. We will collect monetary donations during the Workshop. We ask you to support this project.

We hope you will consider joining us for the 25th National Mission and Evangelism Workshop of the PNCC. We look forward to your attendance. If you have any questions, please contact:

Very Rev. Jaroslaw Nowak, Commission Chairman
Parish Phone: (313) 365-0218
Email: Fr.J.Nowak@gmail.com

2026 Mission Workshop Registration Form

**Polish National Catholic Church
St. Joseph's Parish, Westfield, MA
May 29-31, 2026**

Name: _____

Street Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone Number: _____ Cell: _____

Email: _____

Parish Name: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Travel Plans:

Car: _____ Van: _____ Bus: _____ Airplane: _____

The nearest airport is Bradley International Airport (BDL).

Participants are urged to visit the Mission Workshop chat on the PNCC Facebook page to connect with fellow travelers for possible ride-sharing opportunities.

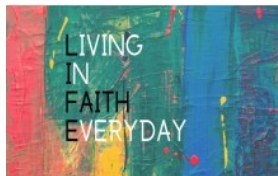
Days of Participation: Friday _____ Saturday _____ Sunday _____

Do you have any special dietary needs? _____

Workshop Registration Fee waived!!!

The deadline for registering for the Workshop is **Wednesday, April 29, 2026.**

Mail your registration form to: **25th Mission and Evangelism Workshop**
c/o **Sue Dibrindisi**
42 Stone Ridge Drive
Florence, MA 01062



Workshop Schedule

Friday, May 29, 2026

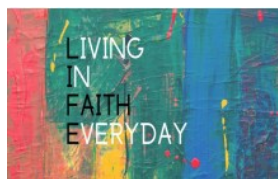
4:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.	Registration at St. Joseph's Parish, Westfield, MA
5:00 p.m.	Welcome – Prime Bishop Anthony Mikovsky Bishop Paul Sobiechowski
5:15 p.m.	Dinner
6:00 p.m.	Icebreakers – Bishop John Mack
6:30 p.m.	Session I – Family Life of Faith – Mary & Erin Tudryn
6:50 p.m.	Small Groups
7:30 p.m.	Evening Prayer – Return to the hotel

Saturday, May 30, 2026

	Breakfast at the Hotel
8:45 a.m.	Morning Prayer
9:10 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.	Session II – Testimonies within the Catholic Faith Cleric Joel Smith & Cleric Jon Johnson
9:30 a.m. – 10:15 a.m.	Small Group Share
10:30 a.m. – 10:50 a.m.	Session III – Entering into the Life of Christ Very Rev. Charles Zawistowski
10:50 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.	Q & A
11:30 a.m.	Break
11:45 a.m.	Group Photo
12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.	Lunch
1:00 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.	Session IV – Daily Discipleship John Harrington & Michael Medeiros
1:30 p.m. – 2:15 p.m.	Small Group Share
2:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.	Session V – Sharing the Faith via Social Media Charles Vasas
3:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.	Q & A
3:30 p.m.	Break
3:45 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.	New Members Classes – Bishop Paul Sobiechowski
4:30 p.m. – 4:45 p.m.	Q & A
4:45 p.m.	Local Ministry Project
5:15 p.m. – 6:15 p.m.	Dinner – Presentation donations to the charity
6:30 p.m.	Commissioning Service & Evening Prayer Return to the Hotel

Sunday, May 31, 2026

10:45 a.m.	Morning Prayer
11:00 a.m.	Holy Mass – Prime Bishop Anthony Mikovsky Brunch following Holy Mass and Concluding Remarks



Hotel & Registration

Individuals are responsible for hotel reservations and payment.

Hampton Inn Westfield

39 Southampton Road

Westfield, MA 01085

Phone (413) 564-6900

Reservation Code: 904

\$149.00 Double Queen Room per night plus tax

\$149.00 King Room per night plus tax

Hotel Rate Expiration Date: Wednesday, April 29, 2026

Workshop Registration Deadline: Wednesday, April 29, 2026.

Please mail your registration to:

25th Mission Workshop

c/o Sue Dibrindisi

42 Stone Ridge Drive

Florence, MA 01062

If you have any questions, please contact:

Very Rev. Jaroslaw Nowak – Phone (313) 505-2964

Email: Fr.J.Nowak@gmail.com

Rev. Robert Koerber – Phone (413) 665-2129

Email: koerber702@charter.net

Sue Dibrindisi – Phone (413) 586-4315



Seminary Elevations

Savonarola Theological Seminary

With thanks to Almighty God for the increase of vocations, the Prime Bishop of the P.N.C.C. and Rector of Savonarola Theological Seminary has announced that the Clerics of the Seminary will receive the Subdiaconate and be ordained to the Order of Deacon on the Solemnity of Saint Joseph, March 19, 2026 during Holy Mass at St. Stanislaus Cathedral, Scranton, PA 18505 at 10:00 a.m.

Being raised to the Diaconate that day will be: Cleric David Dudzinski, Cleric Todd Godwin, Cleric Jon Johnson and Cleric Joel Smith.

Please keep within your prayers these new Deacons of the Church as they enter into their diaconal ministry.

Prayer for the Clergy

Lord Jesus, Great High Priest and Eternal Shepherd, for the building up and expansion of Your Kingdom You have called forth men to apostolic orders to serve in Your Church. By the grace of the Holy Spirit strengthen the Bishops, Priests and Deacons. Endue them with the gifts of wisdom, understanding and knowledge; guide them with Your counsel, given them strength to fulfill their ministry. Fill them with the spirit of piety and the fear of the Lord so they can be true witnesses of Your Gospel. When the time should come for them to cross the threshold of life, receive them into Your heavenly kingdom. We ask this through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Love is All Around Us!

Cathy Andersen - All Saints Cathedral Parish, Chicago, IL

I cannot believe it's February already! It is still quite wintery in Chicago but February has a few holidays that make the winter more bearable – namely, National Dark Chocolate Day (02-01), Groundhog Day (02-02), Ice Cream for Breakfast Day (02-07), Pizza Day (02-09), Chili Day (02-26), and of course, this year's Super Bowl falls on 02-08-26 and then Paczki Day falls on 02-17-26. More importantly, however, February is also commonly referred to as the “Month of Love” as we celebrate Valentine's Day on 02-14.

So, what is love? Love can be many, many things. From my old Webster's Dictionary and my even older Roger's Thesaurus (and I suppose if you were to look online using dictionary.com or thesaurus.com), I came up with many definitions of love, just a few of which follow. Most often love is a noun – an intense affection; a strong feeling of warm personal attraction and attachment; enthusiasm or fondness; kindness; active, self-giving concern for the well-being of others; a beloved person. Love is sometimes used as a verb – to feel affection for; to enjoy enthusiastically; to care for.

Love is often a combination of emotions, behaviors and beliefs. Love can include an emotional connection (warmth, closeness); behavioral actions (support, sharing of values and goals, respect, honesty, patience); intimacy (emotional closeness, vulnerability); commitment (being resilient and intentional; a conscious decision to maintain a relationship and foster its growth); and passion (intense feelings). One might say that love includes communication, commitment, compromise, compatibility, connection, compassion and chemistry. Love can involve sacrifice and struggle, unseen kindness, or anticipation of another's needs. In Scripture, we find the following words in 1 Corinthians 13:13, “And now faith, hope, and love remain, these three, and the greatest of these is love”. We read in 1 Corinthians 13:4-5, “Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs”.

There are different types of love – romantic love (Eros); compassionate or brotherly love (Philia); familial love (Storge); and platonic love.

There is also Agape love. Agape is often recognized as the highest form of love representing selfless, unconditional and sacrificial love that acts for the well-being of others without expecting anything in return. It is not a feeling, but a conscious choice, action and commitment to love, exemplified by Christ's sacrifice. Agape often describes God's love for humanity and the love believers should have for God and others. It is selfless and sacrificial, unconditional, action-oriented, intentional, enduring and forgiving, full of grace and mercy. 1 John 4:7-8 emphasizes that love originates from God saying, “Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love”. John 3:16 reads, “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son”, while in Romans 5:8, we read, “But God proves His love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us”. Further, 1 Corinthians 16:14 reads, “Let all that you do be done in love”, and Ephesians 4:32 says, “Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ, God forgave you”.

We can cultivate Agape in our lives by actively choosing to serve others, especially those who cannot reciprocate. We can treat people with kindness and respect regardless of how we feel about them. We can invest our time, talents and treasures to support others. We can base our actions on the selfless love of Christ. We can forgive others – letting go of grudges and keeping no record of wrongs. When we do these things, we are following God's commands as found in John 13:34-35, “I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”, and Matthew 22:37-39, “God commands, ‘You shall love the

Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself’”. Further, in John 15:13, we read, “No one has greater love than this, to lay down one’s life for one’s friends”. God also tells us that we must love our enemies as in Matthew 5:44, “But I say to you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you”, and in Luke 6:27-28, “But I say to you who are listening: Love your enemies; do good to those who hate you; bless those who curse you; pray for those who mistreat you”. Further, Hebrews 13:2 contain these beautiful words, “Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it”.

We express love in many different ways. It might be cooking someone’s favorite meal or perhaps taking the “cook” out for dinner so he/she has a night off. It is sharing household duties or chores among all family members. It could be running an errand or two for someone who is usually running around in ten different directions at once. Love is asking “What can I do for you?” or saying, “Let me do that for you, please sit down and rest.” It is being kind and considerate in what we do for others or say to others. Love can be listening to the same stories over and over again that your loved one has already shared many times with you. It can mean providing a meal for a homeless person or someone who can no longer cook. It means listening to a stranger - someone who needs someone else to just be there for them at that moment. It is also saying hello to a Veteran who is wearing a hat identifying the branch of service he or she served in and listening to a couple of his or her stories. Love can also be taking a few extra minutes when you order through a drive-thru to ask the person taking your order how his or her day is going and then smiling when you get your order.

And now you may ask, “Where is love?” Well, love is all around us for God is love. God is omnipresent – He is not limited by space or time and is present in all places simultaneously. He loves each of us every day. He forgives us because of His love. He blesses us abundantly each day because of His love. We just need to open our eyes and ears and hearts and souls so we can recognize His blessings and miracles. His love is with us in times of good health or in our suffering, in our laughter and in our tears, in the good times and in the bad, in our successes and in our challenges. His love is in our family members, our relatives, our friends, our work associates, our classmates, and the many strangers that we encounter throughout our day whether in person or on the phone. God’s love is the mealtime we may share with someone. His love is in the conversations we have with our loved ones or strangers. His love is manifested in us as we love others as He loves us. Further, God’s love is apparent in His brilliant creation, nature and animals. In His love, He created a beautiful world for us to share – the beautiful warmth of the bright sun, the amazing sight of bright stars in the night sky, the vibrant colors in a field of wildflowers, a majestic snow-capped mountain, a colorful rainbow after a rain shower, the invigorating smell of a pine forest, the exhilarating thrill of seeing Grand Canyon in person. God allows us to sit in His love as we listen to the birds greet a new day; as the bunnies nibble on some bark, dandelions or grass; and as the squirrels scamper about the yard foraging for food or navigate the trees and rooftops. You see, love is indeed all around us – God is all around us!

I pray that love fills your days and nights throughout February and throughout the rest of the year!



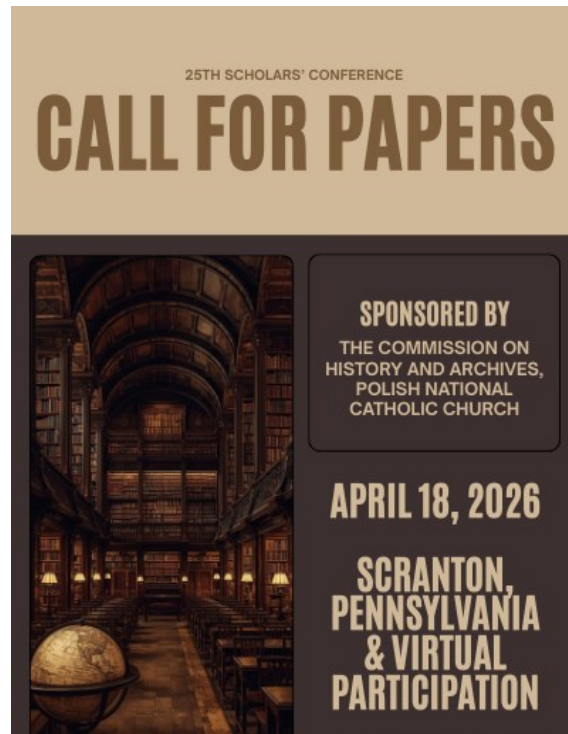
Call for Papers

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

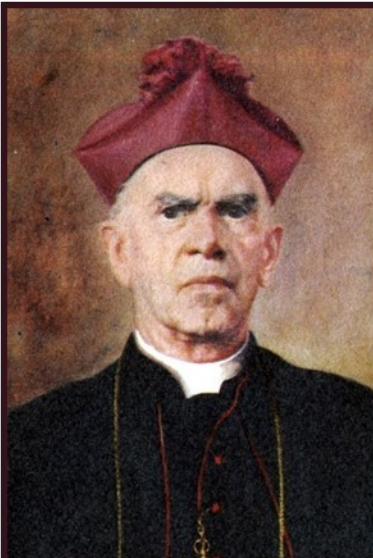
Graduate student presenters are eligible for a \$500 stipend/scholarship.

Submissions & Inquiries

Please submit proposals, article manuscripts for publication consideration, or questions to: dr.ploskonka@savonarola.net

Contact

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



In Honor of Bishop Franciszek Hodur
 From “Ode To Great Men and Great Things in Poetry and Prose”

Rev. Walter A. Hyszko

His Voice Shall Never Cease

(On the 10th Anniversary of Bishop Hodur’s Death)

Each year, his voice louder, more strong,
 Thunders the words of our Church Song –
 “So many years, O Lord, we did faithfully serve.”
 He pleads Grace for those who believed ... blessings deserve.

Since his passing, now will come the hardest trial –
 He asks to forgive the selfish, those who defile
 Their sacred oath to give their best
 To the Church – often – fail the test.

Many voices, to his memory will be raised –
 Prime Bishop Hodur, in high glory, shall be praised ...
 They’ll all praise his great deeds, the best he gave to the Lord ...
 Yet, some will forget the true meaning of his word.

“Dear bishop – what your last breath whispered to be done ...
 Of the vict’ry you sought on earth – is not yet won;
 Thy faithful – giving their best, with tears in their eyes
 Pray, that all who vowed – uplift their hearts to the skies.



The Solemnity of the Institution of the Polish National Catholic Church

The Solemnity of the Institution of the Polish National Catholic Church will be celebrated throughout the Polish National Catholic Church this year on Sunday, March 8, 2026. In celebration of this Solemnity, the P.N.C.C. is again offering to the parishes a full color brochure describing the Solemnity of the Institution and sharing some information on this unique feast of the Polish National Catholic Church. This is a perfect point of information to include in welcome packets or to have in bulletin racks.

25 brochures: \$9.00

50 brochures: \$15.50

75 brochures: 22.00

100 brochures:\$28.00

(All prices include shipping costs.)

Checks, payable to P.N.C.C. Book Department, should be sent to:

P.N.C.C. Book Department
 National Church Center
 1006 Pittston Avenue
 Scranton, PA 18505



APPEAL FOR 2026 EASTER GREETINGS



Please send in your greetings and payment
(U.S. \$20.00 check or money order, payable to God's Field)



Line 1: _____

Line 2: _____

Line 3: _____



It is the time of year for us to appeal to the parishes, the organizations and the individual members of the Polish National Catholic Church -- to publish your Easter greetings in the Official Publication of the Polish National Catholic Church, *God's Field—Rola Boża*.

In past years your responses to our appeals have been very enthusiastic and we sincerely hope your generosity and support will continue this year.

The cost for publishing Easter greetings for individuals, parishes and organizations is \$20.00. Due to space constraints in the *God's Field* page setup, greetings are limited to up to three (3) lines of text.

Example greetings:

Adoration Society of St. John's Parish, Everytown, USA
 Eve Adams, President
 Wesołego Alleluja!

St. John's Parish, Everytown, USA
 Rev. Abel Adams, Pastor
 ALLELUIA! CHRIST IS RISEN!

ALL GREETINGS, ACCOMPANIED BY PAYMENTS, MUST BE RECEIVED BY APRIL 1, 2026 IN ORDER TO ENSURE THEY ARE INCLUDED IN THE EASTER 2026 ISSUE. We no longer publish greetings submitted without payment, so please be sure to send in your payment with your greeting.

Detach, complete and submit the form, above, along with your payment, to:

God's Field Easter Greetings
 National Church Center, P.N.C.C.
 1006 Pittston Avenue
 Scranton, PA 18505

Time to Renew or Get Your New God’s Field Subscription

Thank you all for your continued support of *God’s Field*. It is that time of year to renew annual subscriptions or sign up for a new subscription.

Because of increased printing and shipping costs within the past year, the subscription rate is now **\$58.00 per year for 12 issues mailed within the U.S.** This rate is based on the increased cost of printing, mailing supplies and U.S.P.S. First Class Flat Rate mailing costs. Single issues of *God’s Field* are available for purchase from the National Church Center for **\$2.60 each (pickup)**. These rates will remain in effect until further notice.

Please note that the gratis online version of *God’s Field* will continue to be available to everyone on our website at pncc.org.

If you want to continue to receive *God’s Field* for the March 2026 - February 2027 subscription year, please send a check or money order in USD, payable to God’s Field, along with current name and full mailing address. Please include zip+4 (U.S.) or postal code (Canada) to ensure delivery of your subscription; if you do not include a complete, valid mailing address including zip+4 or postal code we cannot guarantee delivery by the Post Office.

Only paid subscriptions will be mailed, so please make sure your payment is received in the God’s Field office as soon as possible. If your annual subscription is not paid, you may experience a gap in monthly issues of *God’s Field*. The order form (below) and payment should be sent to:


God’s Field
National Church Center, P.N.C.C.
1006 Pittston Avenue
Scranton, PA 18505

Thank you.

The Staff and Management of *God’s Field*—*Rola Boza*

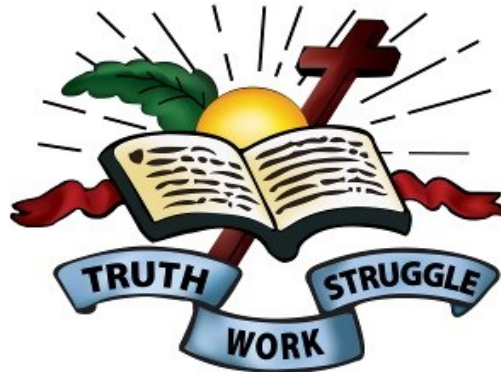


God’s Field Annual Subscription Form March 2026 - February 2027

Name:	<input style="width: 95%;" type="text"/>	Make check/money order payable to God’s Field. Return form & payment to: God’s Field 1006 Pittston Avenue Scranton, PA 18505	
Street Address:	<input style="width: 95%;" type="text"/>		
	<input style="width: 95%;" type="text"/>		
City:	<input style="width: 95%;" type="text"/>		
State/Province:	<input style="width: 20%;" type="text"/>		
Postal Code:	<input style="width: 15%;" type="text"/>	Check No. and Amt:	<input style="width: 35%;" type="text"/>
	(Zip+4)	\$58.00 U.S. Shipping	

EDUCATION AND YOUTH COMMISSION
OF THE
POLISH NATIONAL CATHOLIC CHURCH

STIPEND APPLICATION



Undergraduate Stipend Program
available to qualified P.N.C.C. members
who are enrolled in a college or university.

The applicant:

- Must be an active member of a P.N.C.C. Parish.
- Must be an undergraduate student currently attending a college or university.
- Must complete and sign the application form.
- Must include both the Fall and Spring Semester Tuition Bills; an unofficial transcript from the college or university and/or schedule of classes specifying the number of credits taken or completed for the fall and spring semester for that academic year.
- Must include a letter from the pastor of the P.N.C.C. Parish you are currently a member of stating your involvement within that Parish.
- Must include a list of the P.N.C.C. activities you participate in currently or in the past. Please use additional sheets if needed.
- Applications must be submitted to:
Education and Youth Commission
National Church Center
1006 Pittston Ave
Scranton, PA 18505
- All applications must be postmarked by **May 15th of the Current Year** to be eligible for the stipend award.

**EDUCATION AND YOUTH COMMISSION STIPEND APPLICATION
OF THE POLISH NATIONAL CATHOLIC CHURCH**

1. Applicants Name: _____
Last
First
Middle

2. Applicants Home Address: _____

3. Contact Information: Home phone #: _____
 Cell phone #: _____
 Email: _____

4. Date of Birth: _____

5. P.N.C.C. Parish Name/Address: _____

6. College/University Name: _____
 City & State: _____

7. Current Class Status: _____ Freshman _____ Sophomore
 _____ Junior _____ Senior

8. Fall Semester Credits _____ Spring Semester Credits _____

9. Applicants Field of Study: _____

10. Attach a copy of the fall and spring tuition statements/unofficial transcript and/or schedule of classes including the credits taken for both fall and spring semester.

11. Please attach a letter from your Pastor and a list P.N.C.C. Activities current and past.

 Applicant's Signature

 Date

Central Diocese

Prime Bishop Mikovsky Consecrates New Altar at Holy Name of Jesus Parish Schenectady, NY

On the Solemnity of Christ the King, November 23, 2025, Prime Bishop Anthony Mikovsky consecrated a new altar for the parish community of Holy Name of Jesus in Schenectady, New York.

The new altar was consecrated by the Prime Bishop prior to Holy Mass. The Rite of Consecration is a beautiful ceremony rarely seen. During the Rite, the Holy Spirit is invoked in the blessing of water, wine, salt, and ashes which are then combined to create Gregorian Water which is only used for the Consecration of altars and church buildings. Once created, the altar is blessed with the Gregorian Water and then signed with Holy Chrism in five places with the Sign of the Cross. Once the altar was consecrated, Prime Bishop also blessed the new altar linens. The consecrated altar was then dressed with the new linens.

The Altar was donated to the parish by Mr. Mark Leszczynski in memory of his parents Frank L. & Lydia M. Leszczynski. The parish procured a memorial plaque for the altar.

The Leszczynski family are long time funeral directors in Schenectady operating several funeral homes. The original Leszczynski Funeral Home was located on Eastern Avenue in Schenectady right next door to St. Mary's Roman Catholic parish. That church closed in July 2009. In the process of closing, the church's altar was being removed and was to be thrown in a dumpster. Mr. Leszczynski thankfully stepped in and had the altar stored in the funeral home.

In August 2025, Mr. Leszczynski contacted Fr. Jim Konicki to see if Holy Name of Jesus Parish could use the altar. After an evaluation it was found that the altar's size and finish exactly fit and matched the sanctuary at Holy Name of Jesus Parish. The men of Y.M.S. of R. Branch 56 and Fr. Jim picked up the altar and installed it in the parish.

Following Holy Mass all gathered in the parish hall for a wonderful dinner and fellowship.

We thank Prime Bishop, Fr. Mark Gnidzinski and Fr. Rafal Dadello from the Mohawk Valley Seniorate, our parishioners as well as those from our Seniorate parishes, and Cleric David Dudzinski and Cleric Joel Smith who assisted Prime Bishop.

Receive the gifts which will be placed upon this altar as You accepted the offering of Your High Priest Melchizedek. In rendering thanksgiving to God may Your people who gather around this altar be sanctified to act justly, love tenderly and walk humbly with You. We ask this through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord. – From the Prayer for the Blessing of an Altar with Gregorian Water.

Submitted by Rev. Jim Konicki



St. Stanislaus Cathedral Parish Celebrates Wreaths Across America

Scranton, PA

On Saturday, December 13 the Wreaths Across America ceremony took place at St. Stanislaus Cemetery on Kane Street in Scranton. On the cold December afternoon, the community came together in prayer, remembrance, and gratitude as we laid wreaths on the graves of our veterans.

It was a quiet, but powerful reminder that their service is remembered and honored. Volunteers placed memorial wreaths for all the branches of the military as well as those Missing in Action. Parishioner, Jack Partyka, played "Taps" on the trumpet to conclude the ceremony.

Submitted by Frank Gerardi



Living Nativity at St. Stanislaus Cathedral Parish Scranton, PA

On Sunday, Dec. 28th, The Living Nativity was offered to the glory of God on the Solemnity of the Humble Shepherds. Children from St. Stanislaus Parish participated in this beautiful event during the 9:30am Mass.

Submitted by Frank Gerardi



Prayer for Bishop Francis Hodur
from the Mass for Departed Bishops (2006 P.N.C.C. Missal):



Most Rev. Franciszek Hodur
Organizer and First Prime Bishop
of the
Polish National Catholic Church

Born: Sunday, April 1, 1866

Died: Monday, February 16, 1953

Let us pray.

O Lord, Jesus Christ, Who did assure Your holy Apostles that the highest reward awaits those who strive zealously for the continuance of the Kingdom of God on earth, receive into Your glory the soul our Your servant, Francis Hodur, Bishop of Your Holy Church.

Have compassion on him as You had compassion on the erring Apostles. Mindful of his desire to bring souls to You, reward him with eternal happiness. For You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.



Pray
for
Vocations

An illustration of two hands clasped in prayer, positioned in front of a stained glass window. The window features a diamond pattern in shades of green and orange, with a small cross at the top. The initials 'CLPI' are visible in the bottom right corner of the illustration.

CLPI