



EASTERN CATHOLIC LIFE

Official Publication of the Byzantine Catholic Eparchy of Passaic

VOL. LVII, NO. 6

JUNE 2021

FEAST OF SAINTS PETER AND PAUL, JUNE 29

Icons for the feast generally are of the same iconography. Saint Peter stands on the east side of the icon, while Saint Paul is shown on the western side. Each of the apostles is shown with individual characteristics in Byzantine icons, which distinguish one from the other. Many of these traits developed early on in the development of icon painting, and already by the fifth century in surviving icons, these qualities can be easily recognized.

One of the earliest depictions of Saint Peter is the sixth century encaustic (colored wax) icon exhibited at the Monastery of Saint Catherine in Sinai. In this icon, several features typifying Saint Peter appear: 1) He has a full head with white, tightly-curved hair and beard, which indicates his approximate physical age at his martyrdom; also the white color signifies the multiple graces radiating forth from his priestly heart. 2) Saint Peter clutches

the keys to the kingdom in his hand, a reference to the authority bestowed on him by Christ to bind and loose sins. 3) Saint Peter's eyes search and plumb the depths of human souls seeking and granting God's every-abundant mercy, eyes which also portray the light of the presence of Christ in this world. Remember that Saint Peter actually perceived and recognized Jesus as the Messiah, proclaiming Him the Son of God. These very same eyes were also purified

by his tears of repentance shed after a triple denial of even knowing Our Lord on the Holy Thursday evening. 4) His high brow expresses his dignity as the primary of the apostles, and also indirectly suggests a rock, the prominent "Peter" of the Church of Christ.

Saint Peter wears a himation (cloak) and chiton (tunic), typical daily attire from the epoch. Frequently, horizontal stripes, called clavi can be seen crossing



Icon of Saints Peter and Paul: Feast day of Obligation on June 29

his chiton (tunic) and refer doubly to the clavi, the ribbon like streams which portray his teaching office (and are found on the contemporary Byzantine bishop's mantiya), and secondly harken back to the Jewish prayer shawl or tallit.

On the other side stands Saint Paul, a bald mature man with a very large forehead, who holds either a book or two scrolls. Saint Paul is shown as the author of many of the New Testament

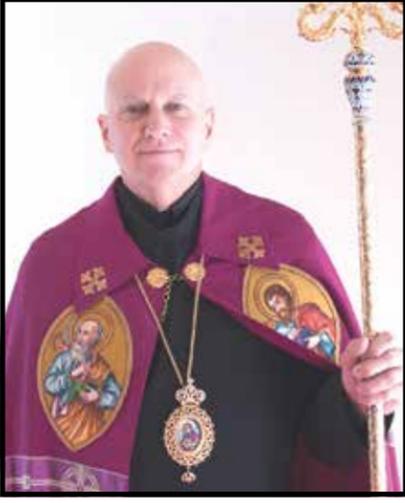
epistles, which he holds in his hand. The grand temple of his head highlights his profound intelligence in the ways of the Lord, while the creases in his skin indicate the sufferings he endured for the Faith. He, too, is dressed in a himation and chiton (daily wear for the time), and is shown aged at the approximate period of his martyrdom.

Sometimes, the two apostles hold a model for the Church between them, demonstrating that their preaching,

teaching, and evangelizing that the Church is based on the solid rock foundation of the Truth in Jesus Christ.

An interesting interplay occurs between Saint Peter and Saint Paul. Saint Peter, who denounced our Lord on the night of Holy Thursday, has his eyes opened with the appearance of the Risen Lord at the shore in Galilee where Saint Peter is commanded to "feed my sheep." Saint Paul, too, was a vehement denounced of the Lord, before

his dramatic conversation on the road to Damascus. It is there that Our Lord opened his eyes to the Truth, and Saint Paul preaches the Way throughout the entire world. How significant that these two holy men with feet of clay become the models and columns of the Faith, gifted with wisdom from God both to see and proclaim Jesus Christ as Lord to the world!



I LIFT UP MY EYES...

Pastoral Reflections of Bishop Kurt



UPON THIS ROCK, I WILL BUILD MY CHURCH

Recently, I read a sensational article from a respectable Catholic newspaper. It resembled investigative journalism and purported to reveal the actions of two powerful cardinals and claimed that it checked its story with its own sources in Rome, and so on. It really got me thinking about how people see their own Church. Why would a respectable Catholic newspaper be writing about the Body of Christ as if it were a secular government? I suppose people in every society see the Church in the same way they see their own society. People in an aristocracy see the Church like an aristocracy; people in a monarchy see the Church like a monarchy; and Americans have come to see the Church like our democratic republic. Americans believe that they should monitor the Church leaders the same way they monitor our elected politicians, and their news media respond by supplying the kind of stories that sell. There are many consequences to this view of the Church that are antithetical to the Good News of Jesus Christ. One consequence is that American Catholics divide the Church into parties just like the rest of our society, and they categorize each other as “liberal”, “conservative”, “radical”, “reactionary”, and so on. Whether or not those labels have any meaning in our Faith is a topic for another day. There is no question that people commit many sins against charity and crimes against reason because of these labels. All of the recent interest in cardinals inspired one wealthy American to undertake the project to compile dossiers on each cardinal, which he is planning to supply for the next papal election.

It is important for any Christian to understand that the Church is neither a monarchy, nor an aristocracy, nor a democracy, nor a republic. Since it is made up of people, it will always have features and procedures that resemble other human societies, but the Church is a people called out of the world by God for His own purposes, for the sanctification of its own members, but also for the enlightenment of the whole world. As an organization, we receive some guidance from the Sacred Scriptures of how we are to see ourselves. First of all, the name “church” in Greek is *ecclesia*, which in Greek society meant the assembly of all the people in contrast to a smaller council of leaders. So, Jesus gave us a clue to His idea of the Church by how He named it. And Jesus did use the word *ecclesia* or “church” three times: once when he gave the keys to Saint Peter, and twice two chapters lat-

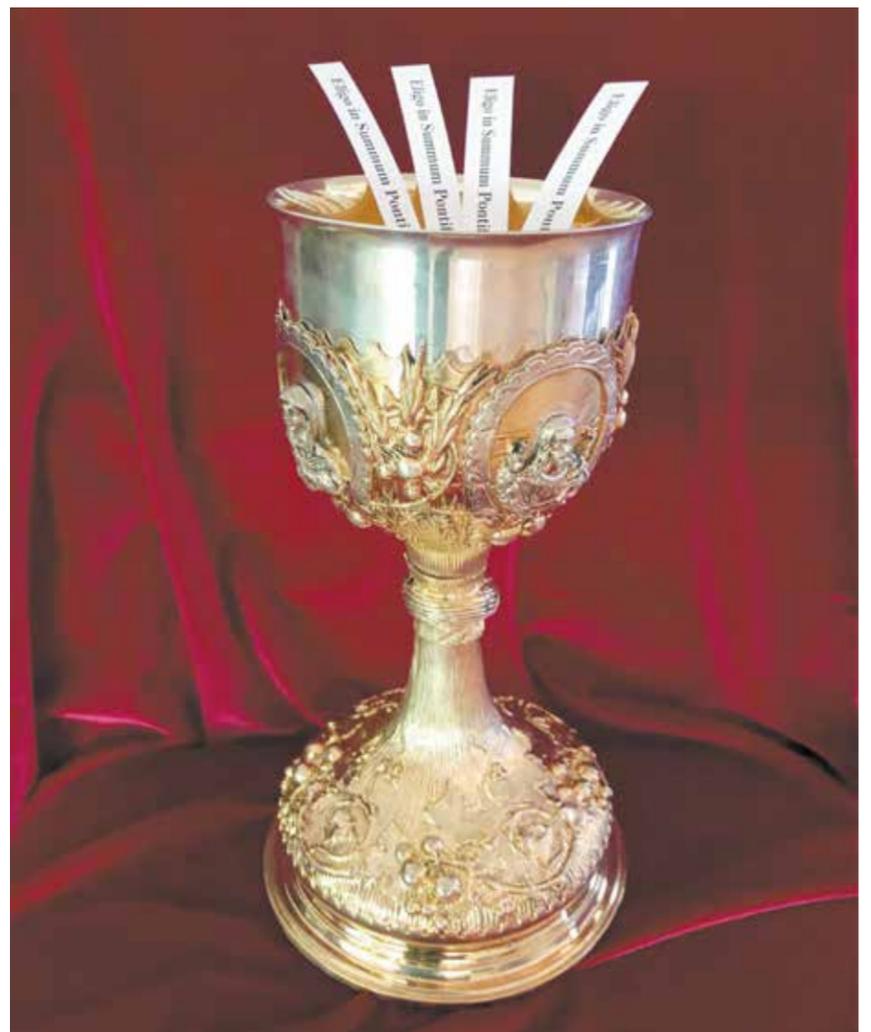
er when He talks about fraternal correction and the authority of the Church. Saint Paul struggled in his ministry to teach the local churches how to live as a Spirit-filled community of mutual love, but without chaos or lawlessness. He gives us three ways to think about the Church. Saint Paul is the one who refers consistently to the Church as the Body of Christ. He points out that a body has different parts that live to support each other, but have different forms, abilities, and purposes. The eye isn’t the foot, and the hand isn’t the ear. The parts of our bodies do not work against each other, but work to protect and care for each other. Saint Paul also calls the Church a building made of stones. Although that is his most lifeless analogy, he uses it for an important point. He refers to Jesus Christ as the cornerstone. This image teaches us that it is never our role or that of anyone else in the Church to replace Christ. In referring to Christ in this manner, Saint Paul is evoking the scriptural prophecies that call the Messiah, “the stone that the builders rejected [which] has become the cornerstone.” Saint Peter also uses the same image, calling Jesus a living stone. The third analogy that Saint Paul uses for the Church is a community of people in which each one has a different gift or “charism.” Indeed, there is no better way to practice charity in the Church than to recognize that we all have different gifts, given by God, and our gifts were given for us to help others, never to glorify ourselves.

Although the Church is neither a democracy nor a republic, interestingly enough, the Papacy is the oldest elected office in the world. The office of the Pope was never hereditary, nor is it taken by force, nor is it for sale. Even when a powerful family had one or two popes in the past, the office slipped away quickly from their grasp. Since the Pope is the Bishop of Rome, he was chosen by the church of Rome for the first thousand years, just as most other bishops were chosen by their churches. There is a lot to be said for election by the people. In fact, there was a bishop in southern France who was chosen (or elected) by the metropolitan archbishop. The emperor Theodosian deposed the bishop when he found out. In his decree he said, the people won’t accept their bishop if they didn’t choose him themselves. In the early church, it seems that local churches often chose (or elected) their bishop, and then the other bishops in the area would come confirm the election and lay hands on the new bishop to ordain him, but only after interrogating him to make sure his faith was the faith of the Catholic Church.

When I say that the bishop was chosen or elected by the local church, and that the Pope of Rome was chosen by the church of Rome, that doesn’t mean that there was anything resembling what

we would call an election in our society. When a local community elected someone, there was often a lot of arguing and shoving and even mob action, until the community settled down on a single choice—at some point in the arguing, one side realized they were outnumbered. Occasionally, the people settled on a single outstanding candidate immediately, but just as often there was a lot of chaos. The election of Saint Augustine is an instructive example. Because he was so well known, he avoided visiting any city in north Africa that was looking for a bishop. He made the mistake of visiting Hippo for some reason, and the local bishop died unexpectedly. The people grabbed him and forced him to be their bishop before he could get away. He found himself the bishop of a backwater town that was far below his talents and prestige. Nevertheless, in those days, these selections by the people were seen as an act of the Holy Spirit, and a bishop never moved.

killed, but there was no popular support to remove the pope. A year later, the tide had turned, and the Roman clergy held an election at the forum and elected Pope Stephen III. Constantine was dragged from the Lateran and imprisoned in a monastery with his eyes gouged out. Stephen called a synod of all the Italian bishops and the first rules were laid down. The synod decreed that all the Roman clergy were eligible to choose the new pope, but only a cardinal deacon or cardinal priest could be chosen. Notice that there was still nothing like what we would call an organized election—just the power of a group to choose someone, but not procedure. In one significant way, this synod set the rule for the next thirteen centuries—a group of designated electors were tasked with choosing the pope. The general population of Rome regained their voice soon after and kept it until 1059.



When the cardinals vote for a new pope, they write only the name of the candidate on a ballot. They have not signed their ballots since the conclave of 1939.

Bishops did not move “up the ladder” back then, but gave up their lives for their flock. And so, Saint Augustine spent the rest of his life in Hippo.

In the late 700’s, a papal succession sparked the very first rules for elections. Imagine, popes were “elected” by the Church of Rome for seven hundred years with no rules! When Pope Paul died in 767, a nobleman named Toto occupied the Lateran (the pope’s residence and cathedral) and had his brother Constantine elected. His opponents called on the Lombards for help, who invaded Rome and Toto was

A particularly chaotic time in papal elections was the late 800’s, but also an important period for the Slavs. Pope John, elected in 872, confirmed the use of the Slavic language in the liturgy and the Bible. The Germans were fiercely and ruthlessly opposed to the missionary work of Saints Cyril and Methodius, and claimed praying was only allowed in Hebrew, Greek, or Latin. Pope John said, “He who made the three main languages, Hebrew, Greek, and Roman, also made all the other languages to sing His praise and glory.” Nevertheless, Pope John became the first pope in history to be assassinated, killed by

a member of his clergy after ten years in office. His successor also made history—Pope Marinus was the first pope in history who was already a bishop. As I mentioned above, bishops customarily never left their diocese, they did not move around, and were forbidden to do so by the Council of Nicaea. Pope Marinus was already consecrated as Bishop of Caere. This irregularity helped fuel the fighting in the next few years. Over the next decades, most popes reigned for only a few years, and many were murdered.

The Holy Roman Emperors began meddling in papal elections after the coronation of Otto in 962, and continued to do so until recently with other European monarchs. Indeed, the election of Saint Pius X probably occurred because the Austrian Emperor vetoed another candidate in that election. During a brief interlude in the power of the emperors, Bishop Gerard of Florence was elected pope by the Cardinal Bishops meeting in Siena in 1059. He took the name of Nicholas, and this year became the most important in the history of papal elections. Because of the chaos and outside influence, Nicholas called a synod of all the bishops of Italy to lay down rules for papal elections. The procedure devised was that the Cardinal bishops should meet, but not before the burial of the previous pope.

They were to choose a suitable member of the clergy of Rome but could choose someone else if there were no suitable candidate. But if Rome was too dangerous, the Cardinal bishops would meet in another place of their choosing along with the clergy and people. They were to present the candidate then for the approval of the Cardinal priests and Cardinal deacons, after which the candidate was presented to the people. Notice that even now, there is no specific procedure such as ballots or rules about majorities. The synod also ruled that the new pope had all the power of the office from the moment he was chosen, except that he could not ordain bishops if he were not yet a bishop himself.

Over the next century, the rules of the synod of 1059 were sometimes observed and sometimes ignored, but remained the standard until 1179 when Pope Stephen convoked the third Lateran Council. Previous elections presumed that the electoral body would eventually reach a consensus and then a unanimous vote. The Lateran Council eliminated distinctions between cardinals, and decreed that the new pope must be elected by two thirds of all the cardinals voting. We take detailed election laws for granted nowadays, although the reactions to our last election show that even the most careful

laws are open to dispute. Believe it or not, the decree of the Lateran Council was the first institutional example in European history of defining a numerical majority for an election. Like previous decrees, this one was ignored off and on following the council, but with time came to be the sacred law of the Catholic Church. Pope Saint John Paul rewrote the laws to allow for less than two thirds after many failed ballots, but Pope Benedict reinstated the eight-hundred-year-old rule.

Interestingly enough, the rule that a pope must receive two thirds of the voting cardinals was modified over time to include a provision that he cannot vote for himself. After the death of Pope Saint Pius X, the last election in which a European monarch was able to veto a candidate, the election of 1914 in the shadow of World War One went through many ballots before Benedict XV was elected. The announcement was delayed for some time, and the new pope told a friend that it was because he was elected by exactly two thirds of the ballots. One of the cardinals demanded that the ballots be checked to ensure that he did not vote for himself. Indeed, he did not, but some speculate that the insult to the new pope influenced the eclipse of the cardinal who asked for the vote.

The choosing of the popes has been as varied and as fascinating as the history of the Church itself. No doubt you know many of the incidents when the cardinals could not decide for months or years, and the people took things into their own hands, cutting off their food or taking the roof off the meeting hall. When I told one professor in California about those incidents, he suggested we should do that to the state legislature when they can't approve a budget. Another colorful custom from former times is this: at one time, when a cardinal was elected Pope, the piously enthusiastic citizens of Rome looted his house. More than one cardinal had his house looted because of a Roman rumor that turned out not to be true! It sounds like papal elections used to be a lot more fun. If anything, though, the history of papal elections is a reminder that the Church is not a republic, nor an aristocracy, nor a monarchy. From the time that Jesus chose Saint Peter, and the dying Saint Peter chose a former slave, until the election of 2013, the Church is not a secular institution, but the Body of Christ. The Pope is not our ruler nor our governor, but our shepherd, commissioned by Jesus Christ after the Resurrection. "Simon Peter, do you love me more than these others?" "Yes, Lord. You know that I love you." "Then feed my sheep."

+Kurt Burnette



FROM THE OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

Guidelines for our churches following the pandemic

In keeping with advice from the CDC, and the local authorities, the following guidelines replace previous Covid rules.

- 1) A mask should be worn by anyone distributing communion or assisting to distribute communion.
- 2) The celebrant should use precautions when handling the gifts or singing or speaking near the gifts. These precautions may include wearing a mask, keeping the gifts covered, standing at a distance from the altar, and sterilizing the hands before touching the gifts.
- 3) The clergy should not drink out of the same chalice that is used for distribution before distribution. They may use a separate chalice, or receive by intinction.
- 4) Distribution of communion should continue using single-use spoons, either individual metal spoons that are sterilized, or spoons that can be burned.
- 5) Beginning Friday, May 28, people in the congregation are not required to wear a mask. People are free to wear a mask for personal protection or as a courtesy to the vulnerable.
- 6) People are still encouraged to practice safe distancing in the pews.
- 7) No one should ask whether or not someone is vaccinated.
- 8) Your local laws may supersede these. Your pastor will inform you if that is the case.

Dispensation from the obligation to attend Divine Liturgy on Sunday or Saturday evening

- 1) Keep in mind, the bishop cannot dispense from Divine Law. The Ten Commandments require us to keep the Lord's Day holy. From the beginning, Christians have obeyed this commandment by attending the Eucharist on Sunday, the day of the Resurrection. We are also required by Divine Law to refrain from work if possible and to avoid commerce if possible.
- 2) Beginning on Sunday, June 6, the dispensation from attending the Divine Liturgy is revoked within the Eparchy of Passaic. Watching a livestream does not fulfill the obligation to attend the Eucharist.
- 3) Just as before the pandemic, anyone is relieved of the obligation for a serious reason such as sickness, immobility, fear, caring for someone else, to protect your own health or the health of others.

Appointments effective May 12, 2021

Very Rev. Peter Hosak is relieved as Syncellus of the Central Pennsylvania Syncellate at his own request.

Very Rev. Edward Higgins is appointed Syncellus of the Central Pennsylvania Syncellate, and is relieved as Protospresbyter of the South Pennsylvania Protospresbyterate.

Very Rev. Andriy Kovach is appointed Protospresbyter of the South Pennsylvania Protospresbyterate.

Very Rev. Alex Shuter is appointed Protospresbyter of the Middle States Protospresbyterate.

EASTERN CATHOLIC LIFE (USPS 165-600) (ISSN 0894-9786)

Official Publication of the
Byzantine Catholic Eparchy of Passaic
Subscription Rate: \$15.00 per year.

News and Photo Services:
Member of the Catholic Press Association of America.

Published monthly by the
Eastern Catholic Press Association
445 Lackawanna Avenue
Woodland Park, NJ 07424
Phone: 973-890-7777 Fax: 973-890-7175

Postage paid at Little Falls, NJ, and additional office at Bellmawr, NJ.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to:
Eastern Catholic Life
445 Lackawanna Avenue
Woodland Park, NJ 07424

Most Reverend Bishop Kurt Burnette
President and Publisher
Father James Badeaux, Editor
Father Ronald Hatton, Associate Editor
Father Lewis Rabayda, Layout Editor

Mrs. Maureen French, Circulation Editor
(mfrench@eparchyofpassaic.com)

E-Mail us at:
ECL@eparchyofpassaic.com

Eparchial Website:
www.EparchyofPassaic.com



PEOPLE YOU KNOW AROUND THE EPARCHY

IN LEVITTOWN...

“Little People Doing BIG Things at OLPH!”

Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish in Levittown, PA, is blessed to announce the start of a new children’s ministry focused on liturgical service and catechesis! Starting this new and exciting program are Adelaide and Nicholas West.

Adelaide, even at her rather young age, is training to be an assistant cantor of the parish. She helps Pan’i Alissa to lead the responses at Divine Liturgy and even takes the lead on some hymns all by herself! One of her favorite things to do is lead the faithful in reciting the Prayer Before Holy Communion. Nicholas has joined the proud ranks of the altar servers at OLPH and assists Father Paul at the Holy Table while learning the skills and reverence necessary to serve in God’s Holy Place.

The ultimate goal of this Children’s Ministry is to engage the youth of the parish to learn about their faith by actively participating in it! Through service, the children experience first hand the awe and grandeur of God’s temple and the effort it takes to conduct various services of public worship. After all, “liturgy” literally IS “work!”



Nicholas and Father Paul West



Nicholas and Adelaide West

Many of Addie and Nick’s friends look forward to joining them in liturgical service and the parish is excited to watch this program flourish!

+FATHER JOHN FINK FALLS ASLEEP IN THE LORD

Father John Fink, a retired priest of the Archdiocese of Miami, FL, and good friend and former administrator of Saint Basil the Great Byzantine Catholic Church in Miami for over 40 years, fell asleep in the Lord on April 24, 2021, a month shy of his fiftieth anniversary of priestly ordination. He served as the Administrator of Saint Basil for nearly two years following the untimely death of +Father Peter Lickman in 2014. Father Fink also assisted at several other Byzantine Catholic parishes in Florida and at Nicholas Melkite Church in Delray Beach, FL. He was trained to celebrate the Divine Liturgy during his early years as a priest.

He served as spiritual director of the Broward County Curia of the Legion of Mary from 1978 to 1985. He was also the spiritual director of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal in 2004. Father John and Father Paul Edwards, of blessed memory, were

the spiritual fathers guiding Father Deacon Michael Opalka of Saint Basil, Miami, during and after his diaconate formation. Father Sal Pignato is the administrator of Saint Basil the Great Parish, Miami.

Father John was loved by the people of Saint Basil Parish and will be greatly missed. May his memory be eternal!

Right: Father +John Fink, Bishop William Skurla, and Father +Peter Lickman



BYZANTINE CATHOLIC SEMINARY OF SAINTS CYRIL AND METHODIUS
FORMING LEADERS FOR THE CHURCH

Earn your Master’s Degree in Theology at the Byzantine Catholic Seminary

Catholic • Ecumenical • Flexible
Affordable • Prestigious • Spiritually enriching
Rooted in ancient Christianity

Degree options are offered both online and on campus. To begin M.A.T. program in upcoming summer semester, application deadline is April 20.

www.bcs.edu

Students have a choice of four different M.A.T. focus areas:

- Chaplaincy
- Dogmatics
- Liturgy
- Sacred Scripture



Summer courses fully online and asynchronous!

School of Theology Summer Courses for Degree Candidates, Non-Matriculating Students, and Auditors are completed in only 7 weeks

Session 1: June 1 to July 16, 2021

Theosis: East and West
Desert Monastics in Context
Research Methods

Session 2: July 5 to August 20, 2021

Ecumenism
History of the Melkite Greek Catholic Church of Antioch

When traveling to the Mid-Atlantic, please visit our churches

Maryland— Patronage of the Mother of God

1265 Linden Avenue
Baltimore, MD 21227
Phone 410-247-4936
Web www.patronagechurch.org
Sunday Divine Liturgy 9:15 am

Patronage at Abingdon meeting at: Stone Chapel at Saint Francis de Sales Church

1450 Abingdon Road
Abingdon, MD 21009
Sunday Divine Liturgy 5:30 pm

Patronage at Hagerstown meeting at: Saint Ann Catholic Church

1525 Oak Hill Avenue
Hagerstown, MD 21742
Saturday Vigil Liturgy 6:45 pm 2 per month
Call Baltimore for schedule

Saint Gregory of Nyssa

12420 Old Gunpowder Road Spur
Beltsville, MD 20705
Phone 301-953-9323
Web www.stgregoryofnyssa.net
Sunday Divine Liturgies
Church Slavonic 8:00 am
Sunday Matins 9:30 am
English Liturgy 10:30 am

Epiphany Mission

9301 Warfield Road
Gaithersburg, MD
Web www.eolmission.org
Sunday Divine Liturgy at 10:00 am

Virginia— Epiphany of our Lord

3410 Woodburn Road
Annandale, VA 22003
Phone: 703-573-3986
Web www.eolbcc.org
Sunday Divine Liturgies 8:00 am & 10:30 am

Ascension of our Lord

114 Palace Lane
Williamsburg, VA 23185
Phone 757-585-2878 (rectory)
Web www.ascensionva.org
Sunday Divine Liturgy 11:00 am

Our Lady of Perpetual Help

216 Parliament Drive
Virginia Beach, VA 23462
Phone 757-456-0809
Web www.olphvb.org
Sunday Divine Liturgy 8:00 am

North Carolina— Saints Cyril and Methodius

2510 Piney Plains Road
Cary, NC 27518

Phone 919-239-4877
Web www.sscyrilmethodius.org
Sunday Divine Liturgy 10:00 am

District of Columbia— Byzantine Ruthenian Chapel Basilica of the National Shrine

400 Michigan Avenue, NE
Washington, DC 20017
Phone 202-526-8300
Web www.nationalshrine.org
No regularly scheduled Sunday Liturgy.
To reserve a date and time, priests must call the Liturgy Office and submit a current letter from their eparchy’s Safe Environment Office.

Anna Donson Memorial Scholarship



The Anna Donson Memorial Scholarship, in its fifth year, will be once again offering a \$1,000.00 scholarship. The committee consists of Dr. Paula Donson, Paul Lohin, Pamela Hemzik, Sarah Latanyshyn, Dr. Dolores Fidishun, Elizabeth Diles, Cathie McAdams, and Sharon Jarrow.

The goal of the scholarship is to assist students who themselves are members of the Carpatho-Rusyn Society, or who would advance the Carpatho-Rusyn culture, language, or tenets of the Carpatho-Rusyn Society. The purpose of this \$1,000.00 scholarship is to recog-

nize and provide financial assistance to an outstanding student enrolled in a higher education program (2 or 4-year duration or graduate program) or any accredited institution that offers certified academic, professional, technical, or vocational training.

The scholarship wishes to encourage and highlight the excellent contributions that our Rusyn people are making to their communities and beyond. The scholarship also intends to accelerate the advancement of our young Carpatho-Rusyn population, expanding the development of our Carpatho-

Rusyn citizens, within their community and state through higher education, advanced learning, and professional academic or vocational work.

The Anna Donson scholarship application form and criteria are available online at the Carpatho-Rusyn Society website: www.c-rs.org Go to **HIGHLIGHTS** on the home page, click on the **2021 Donson Scholarship** button from the **The Anna Donson Memorial Scholarship**, scroll to the bottom of page, and click on the application button to print the application form. There is a donor designation form.

When traveling to the South, please visit our churches

All Saints
10291 Bayshore Road
North Fort Myers, FL 33917
1-239-599-4023

Saint Anne
7120 Massachusetts Ave.
New Port Richey, FL 34653
1-727-849-1190

Epiphany of Our Lord
2030 Old Alabama Road
Roswell, GA 30076
1-770-993-0973

Saint Basil the Great
1475 N.E. 199th Street
Miami, FL 33179-5162
1-305-651-0991

Holy Dormition
17 Buckskin Lane
Ormond Beach, FL 32174
1-386-677-8704

Saints Cyril and Methodius
1002 Bahama Avenue
Fort Pierce, FL 34982
1-772-595-1021

Our Lady of the Sign
7311 Lyons Road
Coconut Creek, FL 33073
1-954-429-0056

Saint Nicholas of Myra
5135 Sand Lake Road
Orlando, FL 32819
1-407-351-0133

Saint Therese
4265 13th Avenue North
Saint Petersburg, FL 33713
1-727-323-4022

**Byzantine Catholic Outreach:
The Villages, FL**
Address: 625 W. Lady Lake Blvd.
Lady Lake, FL 32159 (at St. Alban's)
1-352-530-9631

Virtual Young Adult Retreat

Discovering Truth:

Navigating the Battle of Moral Choices

June 11-13, 2021 - 7:30 pm Friday - 2:00 pm Sunday

SPONSORED BY THE SISTERS OF ST. BASIL THE GREAT



Ages 18-39

Offering: \$50 Donation • Registration Due: June 4

Register by June 1 to receive your copy of the book: "Making Choices" in time for the retreat.

Retreatants will meet by computer in five sessions, each 60-90 minutes beginning 7:30 pm Friday ending by 2:00 pm Sunday. The schedule will be posted on Facebook at this site: [thesistersofstbasilthegreat](https://www.facebook.com/thesistersofstbasilthegreat)

Conferences on Christian life, reflection sheets, breakout sessions for discussion; prayer services will be provided; optional "Emmaus Walk" for those with past experience of the retreat.

Offering: \$50 Donation. Register by email: hpmsm@verizon.net or send to House of Prayer, 510 W. Main Street, Uniontown PA 15401. The donation supports the House of Prayer. Please pay by check and send in with your registration.



Mount St. Macrina
510 W. Main Street
Uniontown, PA 15401
724-438-7149

www.sistersofstbasil.org



Registration Form - Young Adult Retreat

Please print

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email _____

Telephone _____

Church _____

OFFICE OF CHRISTIAN BURIAL FOR +FATHER MICHAEL YURISTA

Homily by Father David Baratelli



Father John Zeyack incenses Bishop Kurt at the beginning of the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy

Matthew 4:18-22

My first encounter with Father Michael Yurista was in July of 1997 when he was assigned as pastor for Saint John Church in Bayonne, NJ. I was already assigned as resident priest and he inherited me for better or worse.

It was a match made in heaven and I came to greatly appreciate Father Mike as a great priest and superb pastor. We had an agreement: I wouldn't crowd him, but always be available to assist him as he deemed necessary.

At the time, I was chaplain to Newark International Airport; the Port Authority Police; and the 913th Airlift Wing

Mass." My immediate response was, "Don't worry, Father Mike, not a problem, as chaplain I have the right to grant you the one-time special faculty you need."

"But I still don't know how to serve the Mass," he responded. To which I countered, "No problem. I'll make you a special *liturgikon* that will have every direction and the necessary prayers; you'll do fine." He agreed and so off I went to Rome with so many restaurants and so little time.

When I returned, I asked the folks at the airport chapel community, "Did you take care of Father Mike? How did he do?" The response was overwhelm-

On June 1, 1941, Father Michael first heard this call of Jesus in the Mystery of Holy Baptism when he embarked upon his life in Christ. This call was affirmed in the Mystery of Holy Chrismation with the outpouring of the Holy Spirit that granted him the many gifts he would generously use in his response to that most important divine invitation. In the gifts of the Eucharist and the Mystery of Holy Confession, Father Mike would continue to be nurtured and reinforced in that call to serve Christ; eventually leading him to a radical response of service in the gift of the Holy Priesthood.

Saint John Paul II was once asked why he became a priest. His response was: "It remains a mystery, even to myself. How does one explain the ways of God? Yet, I know that, at a certain point in my life, I became convinced that Christ was saying to me what He had said to thousands before me: Come follow me... what I heard in my heart was no human voice, nor was it just an idea of my own. Christ was calling me to serve Him as a priest."

And so on, June 4, 1967, Father Michael accepted that call of Christ completely as he was ordained to the service of the priesthood. In his many years of priestly service to the various communities of our Eparchy from Saint Mary Parish in Wilkes-Barre, PA, to Saint Nicholas

seen doing those things which Christ with His own lips declared to be proofs of love to Himself? Saint John continues: "In addressing the leader of the apostles, Christ said, "Peter, do you love me?" and when Peter acknowledged that he did love Him, the Lord added, "If you love me then feed my sheep."

Likewise, Father Mike, in the gift of the priesthood, humbly expressed his constant love of Christ by his fidelity to his ministry. He was a most energetic, creative, unselfish, and gentle man of great compassion and kindness. He served with a generosity of spirit that reflected an unmistakable connection to Him who had called him to service.

It was always a joy to serve the Divine Liturgy with Father Mike. At the Holy Table, he engaged in the sacred mysteries with a peacefulness and serenity that reflected the very divine gifts we embraced in that heavenly encounter, as God touches our humanity so that we might embrace His divinity.

Father Mike truly loved Christ and he responded in love by his faithful and beautiful service of the sheep entrusted to his care. In his life, he was very much connected to Christ, as with Christ he at times had to embrace the cross in his earthly journey and especially in the time of his declining health.



Bishop Kurt blesses the faithful with the trikirion and dikirion

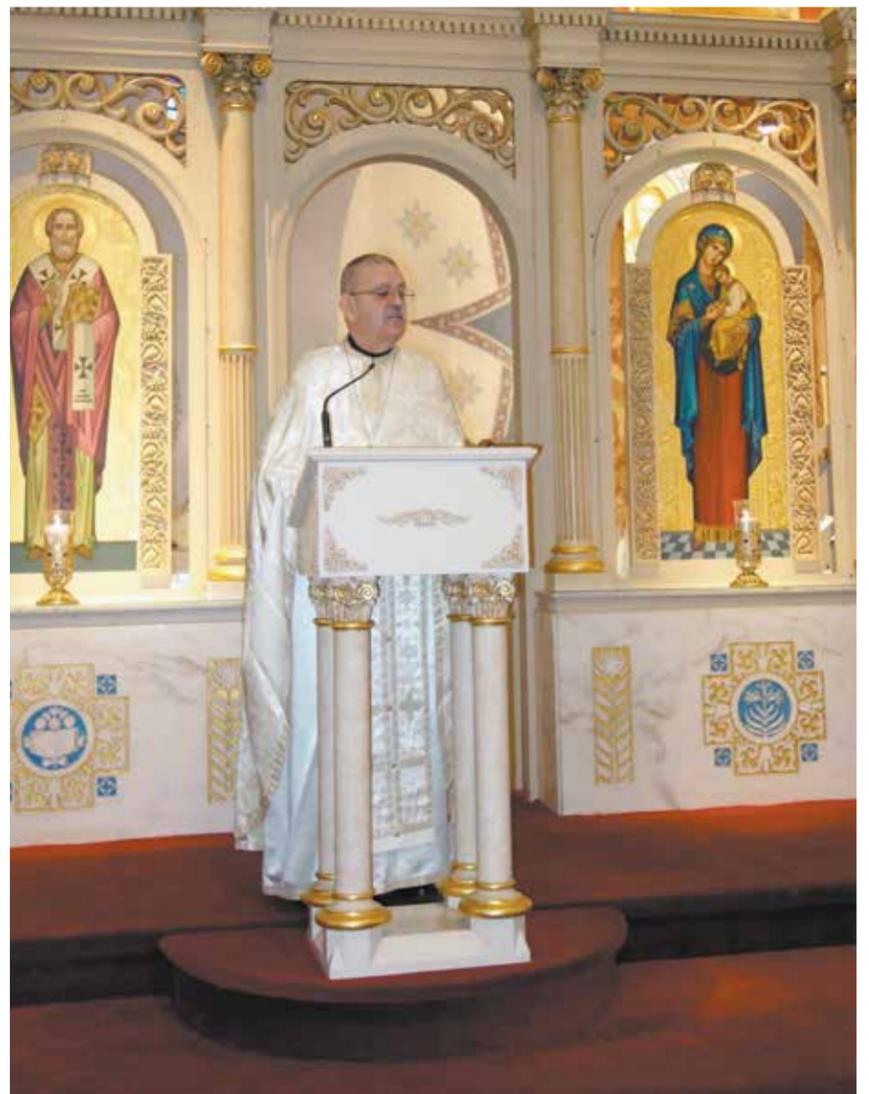
at Willow Grove, PA. Consequently, my life and ministry was crazy; but Father Mike went along with it and, in his openness and kindness, I found a good friend and ally.

One time, as chaplain to the airport, I was scheduled to attend a meeting in Rome. Everything was worked out and a priest was scheduled to cover for me on the Sunday I would be away. At the last minute, the priest cancelled, and I had no coverage.

What was I to do? I immediately went to Father Mike and said, "I need a favor." Without hesitation, he responded, "What can I do for you?" "I need you to cover the 10:30 AM Sunday Roman Mass at the airport." He responded: "But, Father Dave, I don't have an indult, and in thirty years of priesthood, I've never ever celebrated the Roman

ing: "He was great; his Mass was so beautiful." From that time on, the folks would always ask, "When is Father Mike coming back?" Father Mike never knew that I had no authority to grant anyone permission for anything, and I hope for my sake that God doesn't have a problem with it!

We just heard in the Gospel from Matthew the account of the call of the first disciples by Jesus at the Sea of Galilee. As He walked along the seashore, He encountered the two fishermen, the brothers, Peter and Andrew, who were engaged in their work. "Come, follow me," He tells them, "and I will make you fishers of men." This moment in the life of Jesus is one of great significance as it links in an inseparable bond the ministry of the Lord Jesus and the Christian vocation in Christ, for we have all been called to the service of the Gospel.



Father David Baratelli preaches the homily

in Dunellen, NJ, he gave generously of himself in the very image of Him whom he served: He "who came to serve, not to be served."

Saint John Chrysostom tells us "What...could be greater than to be

The loss of a loved one is a time of great grief, but it is also a time of great hope. As Saint John the Wonderworker tells us, "Limitless and without consolation would have been our sorrow for close ones who are dying, if the Lord had not given us eternal life. Our life would be



The family and faithful say their final farewell



Bishop Kurt pours holy oil over the face of +Father Michael as he prays the prayer of absolution

pointless if it ended with death...But man was created for immortality and, by His resurrection, Christ opened the gates of the Heavenly Kingdom, of eternal blessedness, for those who have believed in Him and lived righteously.”

Father Michael Yurista was a man of the Resurrection; in his priestly service, in the ups and downs of life, in the recent most challenging illness that assaulted his physical temple. He lived the truth of the beautiful words we proclaim in these holy days of Pascha. “Christ is risen from the dead, by death he trampled death and to those in the tombs He granted life.”

This very service we celebrate today is an affirmation of our hope, of Father Mike’s hope, in the One who triumphed over death and who sustained by His love, His Priest Michael. In his life and ministry, Father Mike made Peter’s words to Jesus his personal truth; “Lord, you know that I love you.” May we who today honor the memory of God’s servant, the Priest Michael, do the same.

May Father Mike’s memory be eternal for Christ is Risen!

AMEN.



At the graveside, Bishop Kurt blesses the casket

ONLINE CHURCH SINGING CLASSES

OFFERED BY THE

METROPOLITAN CANTOR INSTITUTE

The Metropolitan Cantor Institute offers an online, 2-year program in church singing for both new and experienced cantors. Tuition is \$75 for each eight-week class, which includes feedback to help you improve your singing and cantorial skills. Initial classes on liturgy and church singing are free. For details: <https://mci.archpitt.org/classes> or call Deacon Jeffrey Mierzejewski at (412) 735-1676. Classes are offered at no charge to qualified students from any parish with no current cantor.



★ ★ \$28,000 ★ ★

\$7,000 PER YEAR / 4 YEARS

SCHOLARSHIP

EASTERN CATHOLIC BRILLIANT JEWEL SCHOLARSHIP

AVE MARIA UNIVERSITY

Scan Here for More Information!



PRIESTLY REFLECTIONS

Father Paul Varchola West



“YOU HAVE HEARD OF THE STEADFASTNESS OF JOB...”

This very well-known line from the Universal Epistle of Saint James (5:11) calls to mind the Old Testament figure of Job: a man so faithful to the Lord that even complete and utter ruin, wholesale devastation, could not cause his faith to waver. When Saint James references the steadfastness of Job, he is calling to mind the image of pure patience, of watchfulness, of understanding; a patience that does not judge, but rather, a patience that perseveres in the face of adversity. Recently, I was fortunate enough to be taught a lesson in this regard—without the ashes, boils, death, destruction, sadness, and misery we read of in the Book of Job. My lesson in watchfulness, in steadfastness, came from the most unlikely of sources: a lawnmower.

This year, in an attempt to save the parish some money while simultaneously raising my children to know the value of a hard day's work, among other things I have taken on the duties of landscaping at the rectory. This is work I truly love. I found it silly for me to pay someone to do something I find rewarding. The church did not have a lawnmower, but thankfully we brought our push mower with us from Pittsburgh. This is one of those “old school” push mowers powered by nothing more than hu-

man strength and desire. In Pittsburgh we had about 20ft of grass that we had to worry about, so this type of mower worked great! Here... not so much!

Let's just say it was a struggle to get through everything for many reasons, so much so that I got about half-way through and I threw my hands up and quit. Thankfully, it started to rain so I had the “perfect excuse.” So, I sat at home, as miserable as Job, pondering how I was going to get this task done. The only solution was to bite the bullet and go out and buy a gas-powered mower.

That very evening, one of my neighbors came by and told me how he saw me struggling. He then told me that he had an extra gas-powered mower, and I could have it—the only catch was that it had seen better days and I would have to fix it up a little. I was beyond grateful. So, I called one repair shop—they were four weeks backlogged. Called another one—they were two and a half months backlogged. I had no choice—I HAD to do this myself. Having never repaired a lawnmower before, I went out in the driveway and got to work. Eventually, I got the thing to the point where it would crank, but wouldn't turn over. Then, my neighbor showed up again!

With brute strength that I was lacking, he managed to get it to turn over! It worked! Filled with joy, I began to mow as blue smoke chugged out the side of the exhaust like a steam engine traveling through the great expanse of the western frontier. Knowing it worked, I stopped to cook dinner and planned to get back to mowing later that evening. When I did, the mower wouldn't turn over. I just couldn't get it to start. This went on for a week. I was so frustrated. After a week of tinkering, I figured it was either an issue with a clogged fuel line or the primer not pumping properly. So, I got brave. I took the cap off the engine assembly, poured some gas in and, with a couple of swift pulls of the cord, I got it going!

Now, as long as I can keep limping it along, I have a functioning mower that will get me through this season. Thanks to a combination of my neighbor and my sheer stubbornness (and cheapness), I was able to accomplish what I had set out to do. More importantly, I learned this very important lesson.

Be patient, therefore, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. Behold, the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, being patient over it until it receives the early and the late rain. You also be

patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand. Do not grumble, brethren, against one another, that you may not be judged; behold, the Judge is standing at the doors. As an example of suffering and patience, brethren, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. Behold, we call those happy who were steadfast. You have heard of the steadfastness of Job, and you have seen the purpose of the Lord, how the Lord is compassionate and merciful. (James 5:7-11)

The lesson I learned was not about lawnmower repair.

I learned that, while we wait for the Lord, we must be patient. We must love our neighbor. We must have compassion and understanding. We must have love in all things. As I wait for the coming of the Lord, I will patiently plow my field as the farmer. I will not grumble. I will be happy in my steadfastness. I pray we all do the same, in every aspect of our lives. **ECL**



LIFE, LOVE, AND THE HUMAN PERSON

By Ann M. Koshute, MTS

THE HEART OF A FATHER

On December 8, 2020, Pope Francis issued an Apostolic Letter entitled, *With a Father's Heart*. In it he proclaimed a Year of Saint Joseph, in which the whole Church would both honor this “righteous man” and be led to follow his example. Joseph was entrusted by God with protecting Mary and the Christ Child, first by safeguarding Mary's reputation and seeing to it that she had a humble yet safe place to deliver her baby; and then by shepherding Mary and Jesus to safety from Herod's pursuit, and caring for them when they were finally able to return home. As significant as his role is in salvation history, Joseph remains a mysterious figure. In today's parlance, he is the quintessential “strong, silent type.” The Gospel introduces us to him and tells us a bit about his thoughts on the events surrounding Mary's pregnancy, but never from his own lips. In the *Protoevangelium of James* (a book not part of the canon of Scripture but which contains stories that have become part of Sacred Tradition) we learn more about Joseph, and

he does speak in this apocryphal account. It is from the *Protoevangelium* that Eastern Christians receive the traditional belief that Joseph was a widower with a few children of his own, which could possibly account for references to “the brothers of the Lord” in the Gospels, since Jesus had no biological siblings. Regardless of whether Joseph was old or young, a widower or father to children, we know with certainty that he was chosen by God to be the husband of Mary, the earthly father of Jesus and the protector of the family. Perhaps less important than anything Joseph could have *said* in the Gospel accounts is *how* Joseph lived his faith in God, giving us all an important lesson in trust, patience and surrender.

Mary is the ultimate example of discipleship. We probably don't think of it in these terms, but she is the first Christian, the first one to know and believe in Jesus, and the one who was closest to Him. She teaches us how to follow Jesus. Mary asked questions without pre-

suming answers or arguing (as in her encounter with the Archangel Gabriel, or with the *lost-then-found* child Jesus). Mary accepted suffering and remained faithful in following her Son's ministry, even to the Cross. It is there that she became *our* Mother, and at the same time revealed to us that being a disciple means caring for and nurturing others, both temporally and spiritually. Mary's sinlessness, her obedience to God at every turn and her bodily ascension into Heaven is everything we should aspire to and can only begin to find by following Christ and relying completely on His generosity and grace.

Joseph gives us a different model of discipleship from Mary, though just as compelling, and in some ways perhaps more relatable. Though a “righteous man” according to the Gospel, Joseph only saw his life unfolding through human eyes at first, and not through God's eternal plan. How very like many of us, when things don't go as expected. We question God, question others and

maybe wonder how our *own* righteousness seems to have been overlooked by God. But God's grace truly was effective in Joseph even before his own angelic visitation revealed God's plan. Whatever hurt and confusion Joseph may have felt he did not take out on Mary. The decision to “divorce her quietly” sought to spare Mary additional scrutiny, rather than to expose her to the harsh penalties of an out of wedlock birth. In this, Joseph teaches us that even when we are following the Lord imperfectly, we are making strides toward the kind of discipleship Mary exemplifies. One step at a time, remaining attentive to the promptings of the Spirit, is what the Lord asks of us. If we take a step (or a few steps) backwards, Joseph reminds us that there is always a way to move forward again, to find forgiveness and follow God's plan for us.

Only in humility, and a willingness to hear the Lord and act, does Joseph finally understand and accept the mission God has given him. He

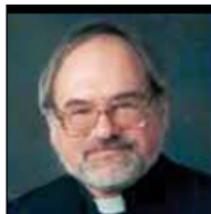
leads, protects and provides for his little family, not according to his pre-determined plan, but in prayerful discernment. The Gospels don't record him uttering a word, but we can imagine Joseph in conversation with Mary, discussing how to keep Jesus safe, praying together and sharing their thoughts on the messages they received from God through the angel. We know that the Holy Family was religiously observant, and Joseph would have

been just as involved in teaching the young Jesus about their Jewish traditions as he was in passing on his knowledge of carpentry. And though we have no record of it, we can certainly imagine Jesus there at Joseph's deathbed, assuring him that his faithfulness would one day be rewarded. Though himself quiet, Joseph's witness to us is powerful.

Not everyone has a good relationship with his or her own father. It

may be difficult for some of us to relate to our dads, who themselves may have experienced past hurts that impact their ability to be protective of and present to either their small or adult children. Regardless of our relationships with our fathers, Saint Joseph shows us that it is to our Heavenly Father that we must all finally turn. He alone heals, restores and redeems all our suffering and pain. With Saint Joseph as a spiritual friend and intercessor, let us pray for

all men – married and single, fathers of children, priests and religious – that they will know that the heart of a father beats within them. Men, embrace your role as a protector of all those entrusted to you and everyone you meet. Like Saint Joseph, be attentive and discern God's word in your heart, lead others to Him, and in your words and actions be a sign of God's presence among us. **ECL**



THE BYZANTINE LITURGY

By Archpriest David Petras, SEOD

THE ANAPHORA: WE REMEMBER THE SAINTS

In the last article, we spoke about how the sacrifice of the Divine Liturgy is offered for all, even those who have been certainly saved, the saints who are with the Lord. This is because our Lord died on the Cross and rose from the tomb for the life of all, and we offer this sacrifice for all, especially for those who have been victorious in faith. We now call "saints," those who have departed and are in glory with God. In many places in his letters, though, Saint Paul called "saints" all those who were baptized and are struggling for life in God. An example is Ephesians 1:1: "Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, to the holy ones who are in Ephesus faithful in Christ Jesus." The word "saint" means "a holy person." This usage is still found in the Liturgy itself, for before Communion the priest proclaims, "Holy gifts to holy people."

In the remembrances of the Anaphora, however, the term "saints" is clearly for those who have struggled and won the victory. They have done this only by the power of Jesus' paschal mystery, his death and resurrection, which we live in the Liturgy. This is acknowledged in the Anaphora of Saint Basil, where we pray, instead, "may we obtain mercy and grace together with all the saints who have pleased you since time began."

We expect the Church to be holy. This is our faith, "In one, holy, catholic and apostolic church." After we receive Communion, we sing, "Keep us in Your holiness so that all the day long we may live according to Your truth." The reality, though, is discouraging to many people today. Too often, in place of love we find judgment, hatred, deceit, and a lack of integrity. We are tempted to self-righteousness and pride, rather than love of neighbor. The Church exists, however, precisely to deal with

these problems, and we forget the words of Saint John Chrysostom, "The Church is a hospital, and not a courtroom for souls. She does not condemn on behalf of sins, but grants remission of sins." True saints are humble and aware of their weakness, and of the words of Saint Paul, "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. Of these I am the foremost." (1 Timothy 1:15) As disappointing as Church people are so often, we still find holiness, and it is the presence of true holiness that supports our faith in God's love.

We are all called to witness to Christ by fidelity to our baptismal promises, but we more often today consider saints to be those people who have displayed a true heroism in virtue. These are the holy people who have been canonized by the Church and held up as a model for us to follow. In the first place are the martyrs, a title from the Greek word for witness. They have given testimony to the truth of God's Word by giving up their life for Christ. Hostility to the Christian faith has existed in all ages, and Bishop Kallistos Ware observed that in our times there have been more martyrs than ever before. This was foretold by our Lord, "If the world hates you, realize that it hated me first Remember the word I spoke to you, 'No slave is greater than his master.' If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you." (John 15:18.20)

In many times and places, though, the Church has lived in peace, and the faithful were not physically persecuted for their faith. It remains our duty to give witness to the power of God's grace and love by our way of life, and we are all called to this vocation. At both ordination for service to the Church and at our marriages to love and service to one another, the hymn is sung: "O holy martyrs, you have struggled

courageously and have received your crowns. Pray to the Lord to have mercy on our souls." For this reason, outside of physical death for Christ, there have been other heroic ways to die to sin as a witness to the Lord. Therefore, in the Anaphora, we commemorate in the first place those saints of the Church who have shown us the way to be saved by the death and resurrection of our Lord. We must not imagine the lot of the saints as sorrow and suffering, but the joy of the fullness of life in God.

We remember, then, the saints in the Anaphora. We remember three by name: first, Mary, the Mother of God, whom we discussed in the last article; second, John the Baptist, highly venerated because our Lord said of him, "among those born of women there has been none greater than John the Baptist (Matthew 11:11);" and third, the saint celebrated on the day the Liturgy is celebrated, for in this way we honor the many saints throughout the year. Then the priest remembers the saints by category: 1) forefathers; 2) fathers; 3) patriarchs; 4) prophets; 5)

apostles; 6) preachers; 7) evangelists; 8) martyrs; 9) confessors; 10) ascetics; 11) every just spirit. This commemoration is almost exactly the same in the Anaphoras of Saint Basil and John Chrysostom. If you omit the first and last categories ("forefathers," which is a duplication of "fathers," and "all the just") you are left with nine categories of saints, arranged in three groups: 1) fathers, patriarchs, prophets (Old Testament); 2) apostles, preachers, evangelists (New Testament); 3) martyrs, confessors, ascetics (Church). These would then correspond to the nine choirs of angels. We remember the holy people who have followed God in all times and places. The saints, therefore, model the many ways we also can follow Christ, and by praying for them and with them, we are encouraged to walk in their steps. Scripture teaches, "since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us rid ourselves of every burden and sin that clings to us and persevere in running the race that lies before us while keeping our eyes fixed on Jesus, the leader and perfecter of faith." (Hebrews 12:1-2) **ECL**

NEW BYZANTINE CATHOLIC COMMUNITY FORMING IN GREATER CHARLOTTE, NC, AREA

Divine Liturgies at the Byzantine Catholic Mission of Fort Mill, SC, for the month of April will be broadcast online. Please contact Ron Somich by email at ron.somich@gmail.com for the link and dial in information. <https://carolinabyzantine.com/>

June: 5, 12, 19, 26

THE COUNCIL OF HIERARCHS OF THE
BYZANTINE CATHOLIC METROPOLITAN
CHURCH OF PITTSBURGH
INVITE YOU TO PARTICIPATE IN
A PILGRIMAGE IN CELEBRATION OF THE
375TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE UNION OF
Uzhorod
AND THE 250TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE
FOUNDING OF THE EPARCHY OF MUKACHEVO

with Fr. Ed Cimbala
and Fr. Yuriy Oros

Postponed Until 2022

For More Information Contact:
Fr. Ed Cimbala
908-872-2928 - fredcimbala@gmail.com

Select International Tours at
800-842-4842
jane@select-intl.com
www.selectinternationaltours.com

SELECT International
We share your faith



SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES

Father Jack Custer, S.S.L., S.T.D.

THEY LEFT THEIR BOAT TO FOLLOW JESUS

On the Second Sunday after Pentecost, we hear how Jesus began to gather the first Apostles (Matthew 4:18-23). Soon after His baptism in the Jordan and His forty-day fast in the wilderness, Jesus was walking along the Sea of Galilee when He caught sight of some fishermen plying their trade. First, He called Simon Peter and his brother, Andrew. Next, He called James and John, the sons of Zebedee. In both cases, Saint Matthew reports that “they immediately left their nets and their boat and followed Him.” Does that sound too simple? It is.

This is not the first time these men have encountered Jesus. Saint John tells us that Jesus had first met and called Andrew at the Jordan, where John was

baptizing (John 1:40-42), and that Andrew brought Simon Peter to Jesus. It is likely that James and John had also been followers of John the Baptist who left him to follow to Jesus (John 1:35; 3:26). The frequent traffic back-and-forth between Galilee and Jerusalem is easily explained. Fish caught in Galilee were regularly taken (probably dried) to the much larger and wealthier market in Jerusalem. It may even be that it was as his supplier of fish that John was “known to the High Priest” (John 18:15)

The Gospel according to Saint Luke (5:1-11) also contains an account of Jesus inviting Peter, Andrew, James and John to follow Him, and it is different enough in its details to allow us to

conclude that Jesus had to re-call these men to discipleship or, perhaps, invite them to a more permanent relationship with Him. This time, Saint Peter puts up some resistance, frightened by the power Jesus has shown in enabling Peter to catch fish where no fish had been found all night long. “Depart from me,” Peter begged Jesus, “for I am a sinful man.” Once again, Jesus reassures Peter that He is only asking him to put to a new use the talent he already has: “From now on, you will be a fisher of men” (Luke 5:10; Matthew 4:19).

These multiple moments of vocation remind us that initial enthusiasm in the spiritual life can wear out quickly (Matthew 13:20-21; Revelation 2:4), and that maintaining a relationship with the Lord requires the discipline of frequent conversation and regular contact (for us, that means prayer and the sacraments). They also reassure us that the Lord will lead us gradually and build on the resources we already have.

The first Apostles never actually left their boats behind for good. Those boats reappear and come in quite handy throughout our Lord’s three-year ministry (see chapters 8, 9, 13, 14 and 15 of Saint Matthew’s Gospel alone). In fact, we find the Apostles back in their boats even after the Resurrection. The person who edited Saint John’s Gospel after his death added one of Saint John’s

memories that had not been included in his original edition of the Gospel, perhaps because it was a little too embarrassing. John 21 (attached after the conclusion in John 20:30-31), shows Peter, Andrew, James, John and three other apostles back to their old life as fishermen in Galilee some time after Jesus’ death. It took an appearance of the Risen Lord, another miraculous catch of fish and a Eucharist-like breakfast on the seashore to bring these men back to their vocations once and for all.

Once again, Jesus singles Simon Peter out for special attention, asking him, “Do you love me more than these?” (John 21:15). Was Jesus gesturing toward the other disciples or rather at the sea, the fish, the nets and the boats? Peter insists three times on his love for the Lord, thus canceling out his triple denial on Holy Thursday (John 21:15-17; John 18:17.25-37). This time, Jesus does not invite him to become a “fisher of men” again. Instead, Peter hears for the first time, about the martyr’s death he would be asked to die for Jesus. He swore at the Last Supper that he would (Luke 22:33). Now, finally, Peter may be mature enough to keep that promise.

ECL

BYZANTINE CATHOLIC OUTREACH THE VILLAGES, FL

Address: 625 W. Lady Lake Blvd.
Lady Lake, FL 32159 (at St. Alban’s)
Intersection of CR466
and Rolling Acres Rd., near the
American Legion



Schedule: (note due to Covid Virus,
Divine Liturgy every two weeks)
In-Person and LIVE at Facebook:
Byzantine Catholic Mission The Villages FL
Local Contact: call or text: 352-530-9631

SCHOOL OF PRAYER

Father G. Scott Boghossian



GOD ALONE SATISFIES

Henry David Thoreau (1817-1862) wrote, “The mass of men lead lives of quiet desperation.” Sadly, this is often true, even for us Christians. Even if we live decent lives, attend the Sunday Divine Liturgy, give our envelopes, and say our prayers, we are not fulfilled. We live without passion, without a deep hunger for God and the things of God, and fulfill our duties in a half-hearted and perfunctory manner, at best.

But this is not the attitude of the saints, the Fathers and the great Christians throughout history. Serious believers desire God and the things of God more than anything else in life. If that is not my attitude, then I need to change.

Our Lord promises, “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied” (Mt. 5:6). Don’t pursue earthly goods. Instead, “seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you” (Mt. 6:33).

Listen to David in the Psalms: “O God, You are my God; earnestly I seek You; my soul thirsts for You; my flesh faints for You, as in a dry and weary land where there is no water” (63:1), and, “I stretch out my hands to You; my soul thirsts for You like a parched land” (143:6). Other psalms, not ascribed to David, express similar sentiments: “My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When shall I come and appear before God?” (42:2), and “My soul longs, yes, faints for the courts of the LORD; my heart and flesh sing for joy to the living God” (84:2). Shouldn’t we long for God and His holy presence with such enthusiasm?

Saint Augustine (354-430) famously wrote, “You have made us for Yourself, and our hearts are restless till they find their rest in You.” We all have experienced this restlessness and dissatisfaction. No earthly relationship, or object, or pleasure, ever fully satisfies the soul of man. When we finally get the thing we wanted, it isn’t long before we want something more.

Why this constant craving? Blaise Pascal (1623-1662) interprets this dissatisfaction as follows: “What else does this craving, and this helplessness, proclaim but that there was once in man a true happiness, of which all that now remains is the empty print and trace? This he tries in vain to fill with everything around him..., though nothing can help, since this infinite abyss can be filled only with an infinite and immutable object; in other words, by God Himself.” God alone satisfies.

So, instead of finishing out our lives in “quiet desperation,” inner-emptiness, and low-grade unhappiness, why not pursue God and the things of God? Heaven is where true happiness is found, and we can be happy here on earth only insofar as we seek our happiness in God.

“Let not the wise man boast in his wisdom, let not the mighty man boast in his might, let not the rich man boast in his riches, but let him who boasts boast in this, that he understands and

knows Me...” (Jer. 9:23). Alphonsus Rodriguez (1538-1616) comments on this verse from Jeremiah, saying, “This is the greatest of all treasures, knowing and loving and serving God, and this is the greatest business we can have; or rather, we have no other business than this; for this we were created..., this is our end, our terminus, and our glory.”

In light of all this, let us renew our resolve to love God and seek Him above all else. This was the dying advice of Saint Anthony (251-356) to his monks: “My dear children, figure to yourselves that each day is the day on which you begin to serve God.” Start again today. To every soul, God declares: “You will seek Me and find Me when you seek Me with all your heart” (Jer. 29:13). Let us repeat to ourselves that maxim of the saints: “God alone satisfies.” **ECL**

As I am writing this, most areas of our country are easing the COVID restrictions in their states and communities. I have to say that I have never felt so free in such a long time as I have in the last couple of days. Within certain limitations, I get to see the faces of friends and parishioners, I don't have to worry about wearing a mask when I go out (except in places where they would still prefer that I wear the mask). I am sure that many people who have, for the first time in ages, come out of their homes back into the world. I didn't think it would have such a profound effect on me, but it has, and it is freeing!

Again, as I am writing this, we are preparing to celebrate the great Feast of the Pentecost, of the Descent of the Holy Spirit upon the disciples and apostles gathered that day in the Upper Room. Although many of them had seen the Risen Lord, and spent those forty days until His Ascension sitting at His feet as He taught them saying, "This is what I told you, while I was still with you, that everything written in the law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms concerning me must be fulfilled." He then opened their minds, so that they might understand the Scriptures. He said to them, "This is what is written, that it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His Name to all the nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And you are witnesses of these things! Behold, I send the promise of my Father on you. But wait in the city of Jerusalem until you are clothed with power from on high" (Luke 24:44-49), I think they might have been wondering what would happen next. I am sure that, when the "Suddenly, there came

from heaven a sound like the rushing of a mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. Divided tongues that seemed like fire appeared and one [tongue] rested on each of them. Then they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them the ability to speak (Act 2:2-4), there was a certain amount of surprise. But Peter found a new freedom, a new power to speak, and we can read his first evangelical sermon that he spoke, "standing up with the Eleven," to those who had gathered in Jerusalem for the Jewish feast of *Shavuot*, the Feast of Weeks, the celebration of the wheat harvest, and the giving of the Torah by God to the children of Israel. This feast was now transformed from the harvest of wheat to the harvest of souls for Christ (cf. John 4:35-38).

The disciples had witnessed so much during Jesus' time on earth, during His passion and after His resurrection. They had so much to reveal to the world, and finally, on this feast, they were given the power to tell all this to the world. They found their freedom in Christ, had found their true vocation in Him. Their lives would never be the same again. This gift has been given to each of us at our Chrismation, our being sealed with the Holy Spirit. If we will take the gift that has been given, our lives will be transformed; we will find our true vocation in Him. Therein lies our peace, our hope, our future, our

SEASONAL REFLECTIONS

Father Ronald Hatton



FREEDOM IN CHRIST

freedom in Christ, which no person, darkness, can take away from us. **ECL** no government, not even the powers of

Oriente Lumen XXV Continues as a Virtual Conference

With the continuing health pandemic, we will hold the Oriente Lumen XXV Conference as an online virtual event on **June 22, 2021 from 1:00 to 4:00 pm EDT**.

The topic this year will be:

"Liturgy and Scripture: Praying the Word of God"

The success of last year indicates our modified approach can be effective: we had 100 participants from 8 countries for a lively 2-hour discussion among the speakers including an historic video connection with St. Catherine's Monastery on Mt. Sinai, the first ever of its kind.

Confirmed plenary speakers for this year will include:

Archbishop Job of Telmessos
Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople, Geneva, Switzerland

Father Andrew Summerson
Byzantine Catholic Eparchy of Parma, Whiting, IN

Father Ted Pulcini
Antiochian Orthodox Church, Chambersburg, PA

Dr. Sr. Vassa Larin
Host of "Coffee with Sister Vassa", Russian Orthodox Church, Vienna, Austria

Father Marco Benini
The Catholic University of America, Washington, DC

Dr. Daniel Stevens, Director of the Scholars Initiative
Brian Hyland, Curator of Latin and Greek Manuscripts
Museum of the Bible, Washington, DC

Additional videos about Liturgy from the OLV library by
Metropolitan Kallistos of Diokleia
Archimandrite Robert Taft, SJ

Bishop John Michael Botean, Moderator
Romanian Catholic Diocese of St. George, Canton, OH

The speakers will pre-record their plenary talks on video which we will make available to registered participants through our YouTube channel in early June. Some additional videos will be made available about the Divine Liturgy by Metropolitan Kallistos and Archimandrite Robert Taft, SJ (of blessed memory) from the OLV library. We also hope to have a first-time ever video walking tour of the display of scripture holdings at the Museum of the Bible in Washington, DC.

On Tuesday, June 22 from 1:00 to 4:00 pm, we will hold an interactive, live panel video discussion among the speakers with Bishop John Michael Botean as moderator. We will collect questions in advance and the speakers will also review each other's presentations beforehand to discuss. The interactive conference will be recorded and made available to registered participants after the conference in case you cannot view the live event.

You can register online at our website:

<https://olfoundation.net/conferences/ol-xxv/>

Registration and advance access to the online videos and live conference is \$50/person before June 1st, and \$75 after June 1st. All registrations are due by June 20th. The videos of last year can be viewed on YouTube here:

https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLAVUj2N7KxM7S_EjCir34E5SK2aU10Ij6



CROATIA WITH A SEVEN DAY CROATIAN ISLAND CRUISE

with **Fr. Ed Cimbala** and **Fr. James Spera**

12 DAYS
October 5-16, 2021



For More Information Contact:
Select International Tours at
800-842-4842 jane@select-intl.com
www.selectinternationaltours.com

NEW EVENT

Passaic Eparchial Byzanteen Rally 2021

BE NOT AFRAID: CHRIST NOT COVID

When: Monday July 30 - Monday August 2, 2021

Where: Carpathian Village/Saint Nicholas Shrine (Cresco/Pocono Summit PA)

This event will be limited to 20 girls and 20 boys, ages 13-17.

Covid regulations and protocols will be adhered to.

Register at: www.eparchyofpassaic.com

THE BYZANTEEN YOUTH RALLY 2021 HAS BEEN POSTPONED

Due to Covid 19 concerns and restrictions on out-of-state travel the Byzan-Teen Youth Rally has been forced to reschedule to June 30 through July 3, 2022. The location of the Rally will remain the same – Mt. St. Mary University in Emmitsburg, MD.

The exciting news is that a virtual rally will be held on Saturday, July 3rd, 2021 A brand new website for the Rally is presently under construction and should soon be finished. The next update will include the link to the new rally site with more information on the virtual rally. The Intereparchial Youth Commission appreciates your patience and understanding during these difficult times, but we are very excited about the programs and events being planned that will allow all our teens throughout our Metropolia to participate without the worry and concerns of travel this year.

EPARCHIAL PARISHES LIVE-STREAM THE DIVINE SERVICES
 Below are just a few examples from our eparchy

Below is a list of many of the Parishes of the Eparchy of Passaic which are Live streaming Divine Liturgy on Saturday, Sunday, and Holy Days. You may access the links to their streaming sites (Facebook, Youtube, etc.) on our website: www.eparchyofpassaic.com.

CONNECTICUT

Saint Nicholas Byzantine Catholic Church—Danbury, CT
 Saint John the Baptist—Trumbull, CT

NEW JERSEY

Cathedral of Saint Michael the Archangel—Passaic, NJ
 Assumption of the Virgin Mary (Saint Mary)—Trenton, NJ
 Our Lady of Perpetual Help—Toms River, NJ
 Our Lady of Perpetual Help—Toms River, NJ—Radio
 Saint Michael Byzantine Catholic Church—Perth Amboy, NJ
 Saint Nicholas Byzantine Catholic Church—Perth Amboy, NJ
 Saint Mary Byzantine Catholic Church—Hillsborough, NJ
 Saint Nicholas Byzantine Catholic Church—Dunellen, NJ
 Saints Peter and Paul Byzantine Catholic Church—Somerset, NJ
 Saint Mary Byzantine Catholic Church—Jersey City, NJ
 Saint John Byzantine Catholic Church—Bayonne, NJ
 Nativity of Our Lord Byzantine Catholic Church—East Brunswick, NJ
 Saint Thomas the Apostle Byzantine Catholic Church—Rahway, NJ
 Saint Elias Byzantine Catholic Church—Carteret, NJ
 Saint George Byzantine Catholic Church—Linden, NJ
 Saint George Byzantine Catholic Church—Newark, NJ

NEW YORK

Saint Andrew Byzantine Catholic Church—Westbury, NY
 Saint Nicholas Byzantine Catholic Church—White Plains, NY
 Saint Mary Byzantine Catholic Church—New York, NY
 Holy Spirit Byzantine Catholic Church—Binghamton, NY
 Resurrection Byzantine Catholic Church—Smithtown, NY

PENNSYLVANIA

Saint Michael Byzantine Catholic Church—Mont Clare, PA
 Saint Mary Byzantine Catholic Church—Wilkes-Barre, PA
 Saint Mary Pokrova Byzantine Catholic Church—Kingston, PA

Saint John Byzantine Church—Wilkes-Barre, PA
 Saint Mary Byzantine Catholic—Mahanoy City, PA
 Saint John Byzantine Church—Wilkes-Barre, PA
 Saint John the Baptist Byzantine Catholic Church—Lansford, PA
 Saints Peter and Paul Byzantine Catholic Church—Bethlehem, PA
 Saint Nicholas Byzantine Catholic Church—Old Forge, PA
 Saint Mary Byzantine Catholic Church—Taylor, PA
 Saints Peter and Paul Byzantine Catholic Church—Minersville, PA
 Saint Michael Byzantine Catholic Church—Dunmore, PA
 Saint Mary Byzantine Catholic Church—Hazleton, PA
 Saint John Byzantine Catholic Church—Hazleton, PA
 Holy Dormition Friary—Sybertsville, PA
 Holy Ghost Byzantine Catholic Church—Jessup, PA
 Our Lady of Perpetual Help Byzantine Catholic Church—Levittown, PA
 Saint Mary Byzantine Catholic Church—Scranton, PA
 Saint Ann Byzantine Catholic Church—Harrisburg, PA

GEORGIA

Epiphany of Our Lord Byzantine Catholic Church—Roswell, GA

VIRGINIA

Ascension of Our Lord Byzantine Catholic Church—Williamsburg, VA
 Our Lady of Perpetual Help Byzantine Catholic Church—Virginia Beach, VA
 Epiphany of Our Lord Byzantine Catholic Church—Annandale, VA

FLORIDA

Holy Dormition Byzantine Catholic Church—Ormond Beach, FL
 Saint Nicholas of Myra Byzantine Catholic Church—Orlando FL
 Saint Anne Byzantine Catholic Church—New Port Richey, FL
 Saint Cyril and Methodius Byzantine Catholic Church—Fort Pierce, FL
 Our Lady of the Sign Byzantine Catholic Church—Coconut Creek, FL

NORTH CAROLINA

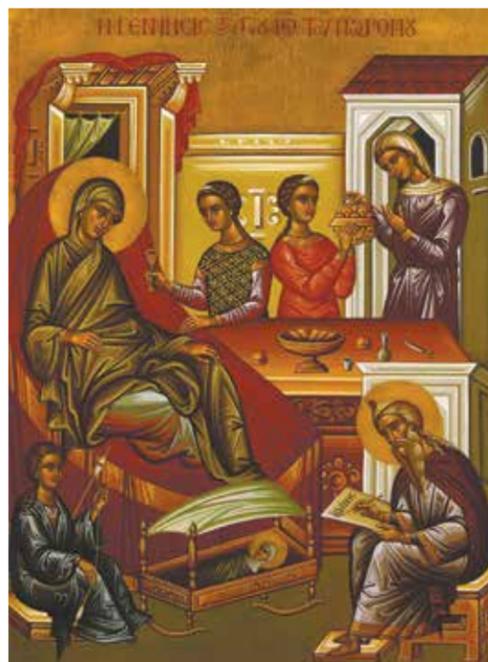
Saints Cyril & Methodius Byzantine Catholic Church—Cary, NC
 The Outreach Community of Greater Charlotte

SOUTH CAROLINA

Charlotte, NC, Byzantine Catholic Mission at Fort Mill, SC

MARYLAND

Patronage of the Mother of God Byzantine Catholic Church—Arbutus, MD
 Saint Gregory of Nyssa Byzantine Catholic Church—Beltsville, MD



Icon of the Nativity of John the Baptist: Solemn Holyday June 24

Eastern Catholic Life

Circulation Department
 445 Lackawanna Avenue
 Woodland Park, NJ 07424

Next Issue:
 July, 2021

Copy Deadline:
 June 24

The current issue of the ECL was printed at Evergreen Printing, Bellmawr, NJ, and was distributed from the U.S. Post Office via second class mailing in Bellmawr, NJ.

UPCOMING EPARCHIAL AND PARISH EVENTS

JUNE, 2021

- 6 Second Sunday after Pentecost
Restoration of the obligation to sanctify Sunday by attendance at Divine Liturgy
- 14 Flag Day
Civic holiday
- 19 Fourth Sunday after Pentecost
Father's Day
- 24 Nativity of the Holy Forerunner and Baptist of the Lord, John
Solemn holy day
- 29 Saints Peter and Paul
*Holyday of obligation*Chancery closed*

JULY, 2021

- 4 Independence Day
Civic holiday
- 5 Independence Day (observed)
Chancery closed

THE BYZANTINE CATHOLIC EPARCHY OF PASSAIC
 subscribes to the

Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People

adopted by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. The Eparchy, within all its parishes, institutions and programs, is committed to assuring a safe environment in ministry for its children and young people that conforms to Charter requirements. For further information regarding the Eparchial Safe Environment Program please contact:

Father David J. Baratelli, Ed.S., M.Div.
 Safe Environment Program Coordinator • 973.890.7777

Dr. Maureen Daddona, Ph.D.
 Victim's Assistance Coordinator • 516.623.6456