



# EASTERN CATHOLIC LIFE

Official Publication of the Byzantine Catholic Eparchy of Passaic

VOL. LXI, NO. 4

APRIL 2025

## CHRIST IS RISEN! INDEED HE IS RISEN!

### A JOURNEY FROM HOLY WEEK TO THE RESURRECTION...



#### Passion Week or Great Week

The Liturgical theme of Passion Week is the suffering and death of our Lord Jesus Christ. The services therefore reflect the terrible tragedy of Calvary. During the first three days, the Church invites us to pray in the words of the troparion: “Behold, the Bridegroom comes at midnight and blessed is the servant whom He shall find awake.” Then, step by step, she leads us to every place which our Lord blessed by His presence at the end of His earthly life.

The triumphant entrance of our Lord to Jerusalem provoked the anger of the Jewish leaders to a point where they decided to put Him to death. This is why the liturgy on the evening of Palm Sunday asks us to hasten “from palm and branches to the fulfillment of the August and saving passion of Christ.”

On Holy Thursday, three events are recalled in the liturgy: the institution of the Eucharist, the washing of the feet of the disciples, and the betrayal of Judas. Throughout the liturgy the following idea is repeated over and over again, as expressed in the troparion: “Receive me today, O Son of God, as a partaker of Your Mystical Supper, for I will not reveal the Mystery to Your enemies nor give You a kiss as did Judas, but like the repentant thief I will confess to You: Remember me, O Lord, in Your kingdom.” “Let no one, O believers, fail to join in the Lord’s Supper. Let no one whatsoever approach the table, like Judas, with deceit.”

The wickedness of Judas is expressed very realistically. Judas is called “law-breaker,” “son of vipers,” and the “murderer” who sets up for himself the gallows of wealth and loses both temporal and divine life.

During the Liturgy of Saint Basil the Great, the bishop blesses the chrisam and the antimensia. Then, before the dismissal, he washes the feet of twelve persons, usually clerics or persons with minor orders, symbolizing Christ’s washing the feet of the twelve apostles. The particular ceremony is a very old one and is already mentioned by Saint Augustine (430 AD).

#### Good Friday

In the morning, Matins (Office of the Sufferings of our Lord Jesus Christ) is performed. The characteristic feature of this service is the reading of twelve Gospel passages selected from the four evangelists. These twelve readings describe in detail the passion of our Lord, beginning at the Mystical Supper where He conducted the holy and touching discourse with His apostles prior to His departure for Gethsemane. The entire service has its aim on stirring up in the hearts of the faithful sympathy and love for Jesus, who willingly laid down His life to reconcile man with His heavenly Father and, thus, to obtain eternal salvation for us all.

The day of our Lord’s passion is universally regarded as a day of mourning and sadness. There is scarcely any other point on which such perfect agreement exists in all lands and in all periods of Christian history. In the Middle Ages, however, a discussion arose over the question as to why the days of saints’ deaths were kept as feasts, but Good Friday as a day of mourning. The answer is obvious. Christ, unlike the saints, attained a yet higher degree of glory through His resurrection. He died not for His own sake, but for our sake.



On Good Friday, the Church strives to express her mourning over the passion and death of Jesus in every possible way. She even goes so far as to forbid the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts. Because Matins have already been celebrated, the Daily Hours are altered.

They are somewhat expanded with sticheras, and readings from the Old and New Testaments. They are called “Royal Hours” because usually the emperor (or king) attended them. During these, the Church asks us to read once again the history of Christ’s sufferings and death as described by the four evangelists. During the Royal Hours, the psalms, readings and hymns refer to the passion of Christ.

In the evening, Solemn Vespers are performed. At the end of Vespers, the priest, vested in full priestly vestments, makes a procession around the church carrying the *plashchanitsa* and places it in the tomb made ready to receive it. The *plashchanitsa* is a winding sheet with a picture of Christ’s body lying dead in the tomb. In English it may be called the “Holy Shroud.” During the procession the people sing the following troparion: “The noble Joseph, having taken from the cross Your most pure body, wrapped it with pure linen and anointed it with fragrant scents, placed it in a new tomb.”

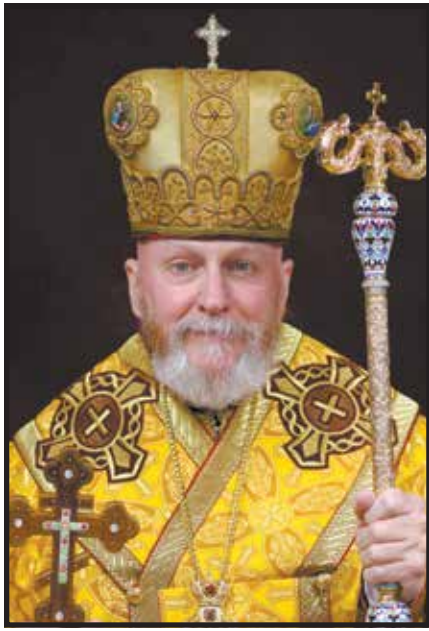
As mentioned already, there is no Divine Liturgy on Good Friday. If, however, the feast of the Annunciation should fall on the same day, then the Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom is celebrated before the service just described.

#### Holy Saturday

Holy Saturday is dedicated to the memory of Our Savior’s entombment and to His descent into Hades to save the souls of the just and to open for them the gates of Heaven. This, too, is a day of mourning. It is numbered among the fast days, although originally in the East, no Saturday was kept as a fast. But the sadness of the day is already lightened by the approaching Resurrection. This anticipation of Christ’s victory is already evident in the Liturgy.

On Holy Saturday the Divine Liturgy of Saint Basil the Great is celebrated together with Vespers. Instead of the trisagion (since formerly on this occasion the catechumens used to be baptized) another hymn based on Galatians 3:27 is substituted: “All you who have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. Alleluia.”

...continued on page 10



# I LIFT UP MY EYES

Pastoral Reflections of Bishop Kurt



## A TALE OF TWO CATHEDRALS

old rule of law required people to respect the “intention of the donor”. That rule has been almost completely eroded, but in this case, the judge respected the law.

In 2018, I had the opportunity to visit the Cathedral after it was completely emptied out on the inside for restoration. The massive pipe organ was removed and all the seats. It was spectacularly beautiful. Every one of the 10,000 pieces of glass was removed for cleaning or restoration. The pipe organ was shipped to Europe for total restoration.

This year, Bishop Artur Bubnevych was consecrated as the sixth bishop of the Eparchy of Phoenix (formerly Van Nuys) on January 30, and we were able to visit

the structure in its mostly finished form. In addition to the main church, there is now a crypt with some mausoleums, and a chapel dedicated to Saint Callistus, one of the first popes. St. Callistus seems to be a patron saint of cemeteries because of the St. Callistus catacomb in Rome.

The completely rebuilt pipe organ is now the sixth largest pipe organ in the world. The four organs that top the list are all in the United States, the largest in the Atlantic City, New Jersey convention center, the second in a department store in Philadelphia, the third in the West Point cadet chapel, and the fourth in the First Congregational church in Los Angeles. The fifth largest in the world is in the cathedral of Passau, Bavaria.

In January and March of this year, my travels took me to two of the most interesting churches in the United States, even the world, but they couldn't be more different. One is as modern as a building could be, and the other as traditional. The first in Garden Grove, California, built in 1977 was called the Crystal Cathedral, and was famous the world over as the home of “The Hour Power” with Rev. Robert Schuller. It is the very spirit of modern architecture. Rev. Schuller began his community by preaching at a drive in theater on Sunday morning. He stood on the concession stand, and the people could listen to the sermon in their cars, just like a drive in theater. His slogan, and he had many, was “Go to Church in your Car.” Could anyone have put his finger on the pulse of the American spirit more insightfully? When they built the first church on his new site, the right-hand wall was all glass. The congregation could sit in the church as most churchgoers do, or continue to go to church in their cars sitting outside the glass wall in their cars. Then when the good pastor built his magnum opus, the Crystal Cathedral, he wanted the building to be all glass, even the ceiling, so that people could worship under God's blue sky as they did outside. Opening in 1980, the glass structure had 10,000 rectangles of glass, transparent from the inside, but mirrors on the outside. It was designed to survive an earthquake of 8 on the Richter scale. For the next twenty-six years, Pastor Schuller preached to an international audience his message of optimism, fellowship, and good will based on the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Unfortunately, the congregation fell into financial disaster through going into debt just before the financial collapse of 2008. In 2010, the Church sought protection in Chapter 11 bankruptcy, and the campus was purchased by the Roman Catholic Diocese of Orange. The campus was 22 acres, and as you can imagine, it is very difficult to find a parcel of that size in that area. Orange County, the home of Disneyland, is some of the most expensive and developed real estate in the country. In fact, the Catholic Diocese was not the highest bidder, but the bankruptcy judge took into account that the Rev. Schuller himself wanted the Catholic Church to have the church. He actually said, “I always wanted the “mother church” to have the Crystal Cathedral eventually.” In fact, Chapman University offered more money for the campus than the Diocese, but the bankruptcy judge took into account the desire of Rev. Fuller as well as the desire of many interested parties to keep the property for worship. After all, the

The organ was originally designed by the organist Virgil Fox who was sort of a “rock star” of organ at the time. It was expanded by Frederick Swann, who played for the Hour of Power throughout its time. While we were visiting, the Cathedral was advertising a “Bach-a-Thon”, the complete works of Johann Sebastian Bach played in nineteen hours, starting at 6:00 A.M. on a Monday and ending after midnight in the wee hours of the morning. Organists from around the United States took turns.

Then in March, the eastern bishops of the United States met in Saint Louis, as we do every year, and I was able to visit another great church. The Basilica of St. Louis is one of the greatest churches in the world, not just in the United States. It is in most ways the polar opposite of Christ Cathedral, the former Crystal Cathedral. It is the most traditional of stone designs, a true basilica with nave, side aisles, pillars, and three domes. What makes it one of the most beautiful churches in the world is the never-ending mosaics. Every possible surface in the interior is covered with colorful mosaics. It is the largest mosaic surface in the western world. The great stone church was completed in 1914, but the mosaics took most of the twentieth century to make and install.

Saint Louis was called “The Gateway to the West”. Even before its role as the gateway to the west, it was destined to be a trading center of America because it is at the confluence of the Mississippi River and the Missouri River. Before the railroads, waterways were the only way to transport large shipments, and much of civilization developed around access to ports and waterways. New York City, Boston, and San Francisco were all great natural harbors. New Orleans, though not a natural harbor, was at the mouth of the great Mississippi River. Pittsburgh is at the confluence of two great rivers, the Monongahela and the Allegheny.

Although the United States was not (and is not) a Catholic Country, many of the immigrations of the nineteenth century were heavily Catholic, and the new cities were filled with these Catholic immigrants, including St. Louis.

The Cathedral in St. Louis had groundbreaking in 1907 and was structurally completed in 1914. In 1912, the installation of the mosaics began, and continued for seventy-six years! Completed in 1988, the beauty and splendor of these works of art fill anyone with awe and gratitude. At any time, there are visitors of all ages including families with children, and despite the lively acoustics of the building with its echo and no sound dampening surfaces, is mostly silent. There is a great and soothing hush. Everyone who walks in the building is struck dumb by the beauty. It brings to mind our Byzantine hymn from Holy Thursday, “Let all mortal flesh keep silent.”

The mosaics are the largest outside of Russia. There are forty-one and half million little tiles comprising the mosaics. That's right: 41.5 million! They cover 83,000 square feet, or 7,700 square meters. There are seven thousand different colors. I learned the difference there between byzantine mosaics and classical (Roman or Greek) mosaics. By “byz-



Christ Cathedral, formerly the Crystal Cathedral



The great Hazel Wright pipe organ, the sixth largest pipe organ in the world. Affectionately called “Hazel” by organists



Above: The console of the great Hazel Wright Organ



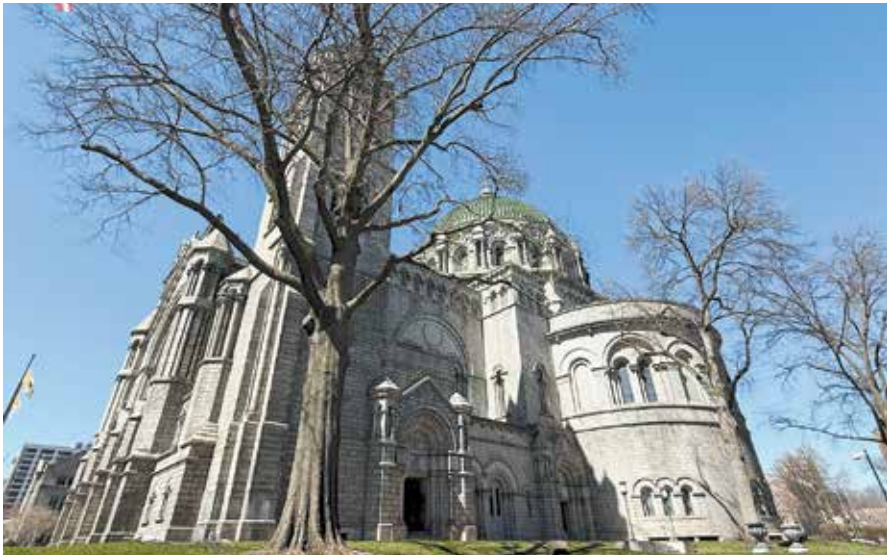
Left: Trompettes en Chamade, or horizontal trumpets. The main organ is over the choir loft and over the altar. The trompettes en chamade are on either side and can be used antiphonally with each other.



Our Byzantine Catholic Church in Orange County, California. Built by Monsignor George Vida, it is one of our most beautiful. Even the Roman Catholic bishop of Orange said that our church is the most beautiful in his diocese.



One of the half domes in the transept. This one depicts Pentecost, the coming of the Holy Spirit and the birth of the Church--the Mystical Body of Christ. The text is from the prophet Joel, "In those days I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh. Your young men and your young women will prophesy. Your old men will have visions and your young men will dream dreams. Even on your man servants and your maidservants I will pour out my Spirit."



The Basilica of St. Louis in St. Louis, Missouri. One of the most beautiful churches, or most beautiful of any building, in the whole world. Dedicated to Louis IX, King of France. The exterior is grey granite.



The main nave of the Basilica with the main dome visible. There are forty one million five hundred thousand tiles in the mosaics, and seven thousand different colors.

antine" we mean those mosaics of the Byzantine Empire, say from 300 AD on, including Hagia Sophia, Ravenna, and San Marco in Venice. The older mosaics were made from naturally occurring colored stone, chipped into little square tiles or other shapes. They were popular floor coverings in the homes of rich people and public baths from very ancient times. The byzantine mosaics, on the other hand, were made from glass tiles,

called **tessera**, with a color backing, or backed with gold leaf. They are used on walls and ceilings to create icons or elaborate designs with vines and leaves and geometric daydreams. "Tessera" comes from the Greek word for "four" since they are generally four sided. (If you read the famous young people's science fiction book, "A Wrinkle in Time", you might remember the word "tesseract", a word made up by the author. It



One of the side aisles. Every square inch is covered with mosaic, glass tiles called tesserae. Even the side aisle is spectacular and worth a trip to the city.

was named tesseract because it had to do with the fourth dimension.)

If you have never visited the city of Saint Louis, it is worth a trip just to visit the Basilica and see the mosaics, and pray to your Creator in the awe-filled comforting spiritual atmosphere of this sacred space, and feel His closeness to you.

Another great structure in Saint Louis is the Arch. It was built in the second half of

the twentieth century, though it was suggested by the President in the 1930's, as a monument to the creation of the United States spanning the continent "from sea to shining sea". There was a contest for the design of the monument, and it was won by a Finnish designer. In a way, it reminds me of the Statue of Liberty. To most people the Statue of Liberty is a green statue that they see in pictures or small souvenir reproductions. The first time you visit the Statue in person, you are overwhelmed by both its size and its beauty. It is sublimely beautiful. What an amazing artist it was who made the draping garment that seem like hanging cloth but are really stiff copper. Similarly, the Arch in St. Louis is almost unnaturally beautiful in person, and really enormous. It is possible to ride up a little train inside the Arch to visit the top, and I did that for the first time on this trip. Even the train must be a great feat of engineering to navigate that curve while keeping the individual cars upright.

I encourage anyone to visit the city of Saint Louis, named for Louis IX, the saint king of France, if only for the Basilica. And if you are ever in Southern California, spend half a day at Christ Cathedral, not only a beautiful and unique building with a great musical instrument, but also the heart of a lively multicultural Church. Glory to Jesus Christ! If you do visit Christ Cathedral, the Crystal Cathedral, be sure to visit our lovely parish, Annunciation Byzantine Catholic Church, which is also a lively multicultural Church.

+Kurt Brunette



Left: The Mississippi River from the top of the Arch. The shadow of the Arch is visible on the river.



Left: The Gateway Arch was built from 1963 to 1965 as a monument to the westward expansion of the United States. It is 630 feet tall. It was designed by Finnish American architect Eero Saarinen, chosen from a contest. There was a movement to build a monument to Thomas Jefferson in the 1930's to revitalize the waterfront where the city began and to create jobs during the depression. Most of the waterfront was demolished in the 1940's except for the original St. Louis Cathedral, which is still a Catholic Church, and "The Old Rock House". A seven member jury chose the design from several proposals in 1947. Saarinen not only won the design contest but lived to see it completed in 1965. The Arch is spectacularly beautiful in person, impossible to imagine from photos.



# PEOPLE YOU KNOW AROUND THE EPARCHY

## IN PERTH AMBOY...

*Fasiangy Celebration at St. Nicholas and St. Michael's*

On March 2, 2025, our parish families at St. Nicholas and St. Michael's gathered for a joyful Fasiangy Celebration! After Sunday's Divine Liturgy, we came together in the hall for a festive meal, enjoying good food, laughter, and fellowship before the start of Great Lent.

A heartfelt thank you to everyone who helped organize, brought food, and made this event so special. May this Lenten season be a time of spiritual renewal and blessings for all!



## BYZANTINE CATHOLIC APPOINTED ORTHODOX LIAISON FOR USCCB ECUMENICAL OFFICE

The Secretariat for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs (SEIA) of the US Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) in Washington, DC, has appointed Lector Jack Figel of Epiphany of Our Lord Byzantine Catholic Church in Annandale, VA, as the coordinator of ecumenical dialogue with the Eastern Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox Churches in America. He will be responsible for building ecumenical relationships between Catholic and Orthodox bishops and theologians in coordination with the international dialogues that are pursuing Church unity. Based at the USCCB headquarters in Washington, Lector Jack will provide staff support to the US bishops' ecumenism committee, and the various dialogues and consultations with the Orthodox Churches in America.

Jack is the founder and chairman of the Orientale Lumen Foundation and Conferences, and founder and publisher of Eastern Christian Publications, including the Eastern Christian Bulletin Service and the smartphone app: ECPUBS. He will continue those activities while working part-time for the USCCB.

On the appointment, Lector Figel said, "I look forward to this opportunity to continue the great work of my predecessor, Fr. Ron Roberson, CSP, of blessed memory, and incorporate a focus on "grass roots" education and acceptance of the ecumenical work that is underway. I also hope we can expand the visibility of the ecumenical office and provide resources such as a newsletter, directory of jurisdictions, and other digital educational material for use at the parish level." Bishop John Michael Botean, Romanian Greek Catholic Eparchy of St. George in Canton, and a member of the bishops' committee on ecumenism, said, "I've known Jack since I attended the first Orientale Lumen Conference in 1997, nearly 30 years ago. He brings an understanding of both Catholic and Orthodox traditions to his new position, and a friendly, enthusiastic attitude for addressing difficult issues." Fr Russ McDougall, CSC, Executive Director of the SEIA, said, "we are excited to have Jack's years of ecumenical experience join our office and hope his existing relationships with the Orthodox Churches will provide a basis for continued dialogue."

More information about the SEIA can be found at:

<https://www.usccb.org/committees/ecumenical-interreligious-affairs>

More information about the Orientale Lumen Foundation can be found at:

<https://olfoundation.net/>

### BYZANTINE CATHOLIC EPARCHY OF PASSAIC 2024 BISHOP'S ANNUAL APPEAL

Please pledge online at [eparchyofpassaic.com](http://eparchyofpassaic.com)  
or mail check payable to Eparchy of Passaic  
in the envelope provided.

**Remember that each Parish that reaches or exceeds their Goal  
receives a refund of 40% of the total amount contributed.**

\$2,500.00     \$1,000.00     \$500.00

\$250.00 \_\_\_\_\_     Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_

- full payment enclosed
- first payment enclosed; I will be billed for 4 additional installments.

The 2024 Bishop's Appeal will run through the end of our fiscal year, June 2025.  
Contributions received prior to December 31, 2024 will count toward your 2024 tax year.  
Acknowledgement letter will be mailed prior to January 31, 2024.

\_\_\_\_\_ New Address or Correction \_\_\_\_\_

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[WWW.CAROLINABYZANTINE.COM](http://WWW.CAROLINABYZANTINE.COM)



## SAVE THE DATES

### 2025/26 Marriage Jubilarian Dates

**October 11, 2025 (Saturday)**

Marriage Jubilarians - Middle States  
 Epiphany of Our Lord - Annandale, VA  
 4:00 PM - Banquet to Follow on Premise

**October 19, 2025 (Sunday)**

Marriage Jubilarians - New Jersey, New York, Connecticut  
 Saint Mary's - Hillsborough, NJ  
 3:00 PM - Banquet to Follow on Premise

**October 26, 2025 (Sunday)**

Marriage Jubilarians - All Pennsylvania  
 Saint John's - Hazleton, PA  
 3:00 PM Banquet to Follow at Capriotti's Catering- McAdoo

**January 17, 2026 (Saturday)**

Marriage Jubilarians - Southern States  
 Saint Nicholas - Orlando, FL  
 11:00 AM – Banquet to Follow on Premise

If you are celebrating a special Wedding Anniversary – 5-year increments,

Please submit your name to your pastor to be included in this year's Jubilarian Celebration.



## Visiting New York City? Come Worship With Us!

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 Father Edward G. Cimbala, D.Min.—Pastor

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**Sunday Divine Liturgy  
 10:00 AM**

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Contact for more information:  
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[andrewskitko@gmail.com](mailto:andrewskitko@gmail.com)

### EASTERN CATHOLIC LIFE

(USPS 165-600) (ISSN 0894-9786)

Official Publication of the Byzantine Catholic Eparchy of Passaic  
 Subscription Rate: \$20.00 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

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# CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION OF THE BYZANTINE RUTHENIAN CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES

By Very Reverend John G. Basarab



*The Iwo Jima Memorial, Arlington, VA*

**H**is action pose is captured in bronze for the ages in the Iwo Jima Monument placed before the entrance gate of Arlington National Cemetery on the ceremonial road linking this hallowed burial ground of the nation's presidents and heroes with the national capital, Washington, DC, spread out on the other side of the Memorial Bridge crossing of the Potomac River

Marine Corps Sergeant Michael Strank commanded the squad that raised Old Glory on Mt. Suribachi at Iwo Jima. The first flag raised on the volcanic summit on the morning of February 23, 1945, was too small for Marines fighting on the island to see so Lt. Colonel Chandler Johnson ordered Strank to take a detachment of his squad that afternoon to raise a larger flag. Sergeant Strank would give his life—“the last, full measure of devotion”—on March 1, 1945, just days after lifting the flagpole flying the Stars and Stripes. He is buried here in Arlington National, a hero interred alongside thousands of heroes.

In the Marine Corps, Sgt. Strank was known as “a Marine’s Marine”, but back in Franklin Borough, Pennsylvania, this Marine was known as a Byzantine Catholic, a Greek Catholic they called them in his time. He was born in Jarabina, Czechoslovakia, but in 1922, his father, Vasyl Strank, who had come to work in the United States after World War I, earned enough money to bring three-year-old Michael and his mother Martha to the United States of America.

Two years later, on August 13, 1924, the Strank family and the estimated 300,000 Greek Catholic Rusyns, Slovaks, Hungarians, and Croatians in the United States received a bishop, the Most Reverend Basil Takach, and subsequently the Greek Catholic Exarchate—a mission eparchy—was located in Munhall, a suburb of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. These groups had begun arriving in the United States after the American Civil War (1861-1865) had depleted the work-force population just as the United States had geared up for industrialization. They brought with them a strong work ethic, a fervent dedication to family, and a powerful love

of their particular Church. With hard work and at great sacrifice, they built churches and rectories, sent petitions to bishops back in Europe for priests and paid for the clergy travel expenses with their families to the US, and yes, endured misunderstanding and resistance in their new adopted country. All the while they were advocating for their own bishop.

Now, one hundred years after the arrival of their first bishop and the establishment of their exarchate, Byzantine Catholic pilgrims from a dozen US states representing the Archeparchy of Pittsburgh and the Eparchies of Pas-



*Heirarchical Divine Liturgy in the Crypt Church of the Basilica of the Immaculate Conception, Washington, DC*

saic, Parma, and Phoenix, traveled to Washington, DC and assembled at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception with their archbishop and bishops on a pilgrimage of thanksgiving October 12 and 13, 2024. The greatest travel distance logged was Archbishop Skurla himself who was attending the Synod of Bishops in Rome and caught a flight to Dulles International to preside over the anniversary events.

The pilgrimage also commemorated the fiftieth anniversary of the dedication and blessing of the Byzantine Ruthenian Chapel at the Basilica of the National Shrine which took place October 6, 1974, and was timed to coincide with the fiftieth anniversary of the arrival of Bishop Takach and the establishment of the Exarchate. Iconographer Christina Dochwat, who was responsible for

the design of the chapel as well as the mosaics, had traced the number 50 in gold tesserae with Bishop Takach's episcopal coat of arms in the lower left corner of one of the chapel's mosaics.

Thanks to the financial sponsorship of Bishop Kurt Burnette and the Eparchy of Passaic, the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy of Thanksgiving was broadcast on EWTN and also live-streamed by the Basilica of the National Shrine, while the Moleben to the Mother of God was live streamed on the Basilica site, thus reaching an audience across the nation and around the world.

The Thanksgiving Divine Liturgy was offered in the Crypt Church of the Basilica by Metropolitan Archbishop William Skurla, Bishop Kurt Burnette, and Bishop Robert Pipta. Concelebrating priests were representatives of the Archeparchy of Pittsburgh, the Eparchies of Passaic, Parma, and Phoenix, and the religious priests who had served in the United States, while the two deacons were from the Byzantine Catholic Seminary and from the Eparchy of Passaic, respectively. Seminarians from Saints Cyril and Methodius Seminary, Pittsburgh, PA, served at the Divine Liturgy; Sister Susan Sisko, OSBM, provincial superior of the Sisters of Saint Basil the Great—Our Lady of Perpetual Help Province—chanted the apostolic reading; and local cantors from Epiphany of our Lord Church,

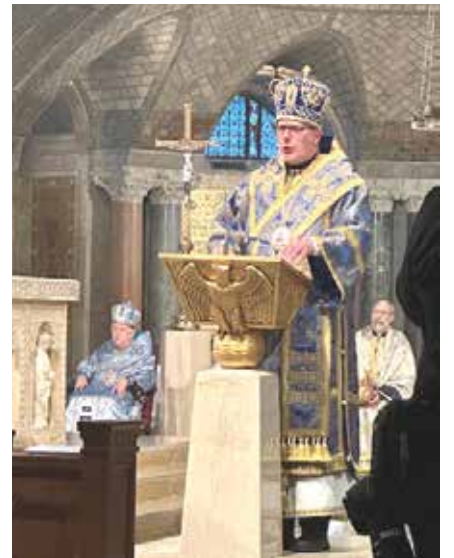


*Archbishop William Skurla blesses the faithful*

them as the Archbishop and Bishops offered the Sacrifice of the Divine Liturgy; the crosses from Bishop Takach's chapel in his episcopal residence were placed—one on the Mary Altar and one on the Table of Preparation. Finally, the crozier, the episcopal staff of Bishop Takach, was used by Archbishop William for the Divine Liturgy.

The worship booklets for the Divine Liturgy as well as for the Moleben and the Panachida were provided by the generosity of The Greek Catholic Union, the fraternal insurance company whose own 132-year history was intertwined with the history of the arrival of Rusyn, Slovak, Hungarian and Croatian immigrants who formed the initial parishes in the United States, and their advocacy for a bishop.

Joining the hundreds of Faithful were sisters representing the Sisters of Saint Basil the Great, Sister Servants of Mary



*Bishop Robert Pipta gives the homily*

Immaculate, and Byzantine Carmelite Sisters.

Following the Divine Liturgy, lunch was served at the Basilica cafeteria, and after lunch pilgrims were able to browse the Basilica Gift Shop and the Basilica Bookstore, and visit over eighty chapels and oratories, each offered by different Churches, nations, peoples, religious orders, and even by individuals, such as Our Lady of Hope chapel offered by Bob and Delores Hope.

The people assembled again, this time in Memorial Hall, just outside the Byzantine Ruthenian Chapel where Bishop Kurt Burnette celebrated the Moleben to the Mother of God and preached the homily.

Annandale, VA, led the congregational singing of the Prostopinije, the traditional Carpathian plainchant. The homilist was Bishop Robert Pipta, bishop of the Eparchy of Parma.

As an indication of the significance of the anniversary and the importance of the occasion to the history of the Catholic Church in the United States, Monsignor Walter Rossi, Rector of the Basilica of the National Shrine, and Monsignor Vito Buonanno, Director of Pilgrimages at the Basilica, concelebrated the Divine Liturgy.

There were tangible signs of a personal connection with Bishop Takach: Bishop Takach's antimention was on the main altar—called the Mary Altar—in the Crypt Church, folded under the Holy Gospel and unfolded when the chalices and discoi were placed upon



*The Bishops of the Metropolia process*

At 3:00 PM—the hour of our Lord's sacrificial death on the cross—Bishop Robert Pipta prayed a Panachida for our departed bishops, priests, deacons, religious and Christ's Faithful, and with that memorial service, the pilgrimage time at the Basilica concluded, with the thought of the labors and of the many and varied sacrifices the clergy, religious, and Christ's Faithful made in the one hundred forty year history of our Church in the United States.

A festive banquet was held that evening at Epiphany of our Lord Byzantine Catholic Church parish center hall in Annandale, Virginia. At the banquet, a television documentary, "Treasury of Blessings", produced by Diane and Bob Grip, was premiered. The historical documentary had been under production for more than a year and featured archival films, still pictures and videos gathered from the Archeparchial archives, private collections and on-site locations from all four eparchies. Metropolitan Archbishop William C. Skur-



*The Divine Liturgy at Epiphany of Our Lord, Annandale, VA*

la, D.D., is the Executive Producer. The historical production was introduced by Bob Grip and was very well received by all in attendance. The Eternal Word Television Network, EWTN, had scheduled broadcast of the documentary for this same weekend.

On Sunday, October 13<sup>th</sup>, the Sunday of the Fathers of the Seventh Ecumenical Council, a Hierarchical Divine Liturgy was offered at Epiphany of our Lord Byzantine Catholic Church, Annandale, VA. Bishop Kurt Burnette was principal celebrant and homilist, while Archbishop William Skurla and Bishop Robert Pipta concelebrated along with priests and deacons of the Archeparchy and Eparchies of Passaic, Parma, and Phoenix. Seminarians from the Byzantine Catholic Seminary were servers for the Liturgy. Epiphany parish cantors led the people in the responses, and Sister Susan Sisko, O.S.B.M. read the epistles.



*Clergy, Seminarians, and Faithful of the Metropolia of Pittsburgh, PA*

After the Divine Liturgy, a luncheon was held in the parish center. After the luncheon, pilgrims—Christ's Faithful with their bishops, priests, sisters, and seminarians, spent time talking to old friends or new acquaintances, and seemed reticent to leave and see the celebration conclude.

Some left Epiphany church to visit Arlington National Cemetery and the Iwo Jima Memorial, and the public monuments and government buildings in Washington, DC before returning to their homes.

All, however, left reflecting on the events of the past two days: how Bishop Takach, Mother Macrina and the sisters, the pioneering priests, and especially Christ's Faithful faced obstacles and challenges, and persevered, knowing that Jesus Christ had given them

their Church through the Apostle Andrew, and that the Lord was taking the lead as He accompanied them in this new land and fed them. Now, rededicated by the anniversary commemoration, it is our turn to return to the great work of sharing the Gospel of Salvation in the Second Century of our history without fearing the obstacles and challenges we face in our time.

*"Therefore, 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).*

## ANNUAL MEETING OF THE EASTERN CATHOLIC ASSOCIATES

*by Bishop Paul Chomnycky, Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of Stamford, CT*

From Monday, March 17 until Wednesday, March 19 the annual spring meeting of the Eastern Catholic Associates (ECA) – the bishops of the Eastern Catholic churches of the United States – was held in Saint Louis, Missouri. Following a long-standing tradition, the meeting was hosted by Bishop Elias Zaidan of the Maronite Eparchy of Our Lady of Lebanon at the Maronite Catholic Pastoral Center, located next to the Maronite Cathedral of Saint Raymond in downtown Saint Louis.

Besides regular administrative matters, other topics of common interest to the Eastern churches of the United States were addressed during the meeting:

Reverend Daniel Dozier, the Director of the Eastern Catholic Conference of Eparchial Directors of Religious Education (ECED), along with ECED Business Manager, Amanda Singel, reported on the activities of the ECED during the past year and a new initiative involving a partnership with the Catechetical Institute of Franciscan University in Steubenville, OH. The ECED is the publishing arm of the ECA, which prints and distributes religious and catechetical literature for our parishes.

Kevin Day, Director of Catholic Home Missions (CHM) and Ken Ong, Grant Specialist spoke to the bishops regarding new and on-going initiatives to sup-

port our parish programs. The CHM is a grant making agency of the USCCB (United States Conference of Catholic Bishops) that offers financial support to smaller dioceses and eparchies in the United States. The Eastern Catholic Churches of the United States have been the beneficiaries of significant financial support provided by the CMH over the years.

Father Tony Massad, a Maronite priest serving in Youngstown, Ohio spoke to the bishops regarding a new initiative in youth ministry entitled "Alive in Christ". An in-person conference is planned for the autumn in Parma, Ohio for youth facilitators and young adult leaders. Delegates from all the eastern churches will be invited to pray together, to network and share best practices.

Bishop Daniel Flores, the representative of the USCCB to the General Secretariat of the Papal Synod on Synodality joined the bishops via Zoom for a listening session and a fruitful dialogue on the relationship between the Eastern Catholic Churches and the Latin Church in working towards a synodal path.

The bishops also devoted time in discussing how recent changes in US foreign and domestic policy has affected the delivery of Catholic social services, aid to immigrants at home and abroad.



Time was also devoted to reports on the struggles, challenges and even persecution being faced by the faithful in the ancestral homelands of our Churches, some of which are currently suffering wars and violence.

On Tuesday evening, the bishops had the opportunity to participate in the Maronite Divine Liturgy (Holy Qurbana), celebrated by Bishop Elias Zaidan in the chapel of the pastoral center. A tasty Lebanese supper followed at which we were joined by Roman Catholic Archbishop of Saint Louis, Most Reverend Mitchell Rozanski.

The meeting reconvened on Wednesday morning at 9:00 am. The bishops had a chance to give a short review of the work of the various committees and sub-committees of the USCCB of which they are members. Two of our

number serve as chairs of USCCB committees.

During our annual meeting the bishops have made it a tradition to learn more about our sister Churches. This year, Bishops Gregory Mansour and Elias Zaidan of the Maronite Church gave a presentation of the history, spirituality, and current situation of the Maronite Church in Lebanon and in the United States.

The meeting concluded with a fraternal lunch in the Maronite Pastoral Center.

*Our bishops, Bishop Kurt, Bishop Robert, and Bishop Artur, attended the meeting as is our annual custom. Archbishop William Skurla was unable to attend because he was at the installation of the new Archbishop of Detroit.—Editor*

# WHAT'S COOKING FOR PASCHA?

By Georgia Zeedick

Slavic people everywhere will be taking baskets loaded with holiday foods to church for the traditional Paschal blessing which is a *must* prior to eating those exquisite foods.

Neatly arranged in the baskets will be *sunka* (ham), *slanina* (bacon), *chrin* (beets with horseradish), salt, *pascha*, *kolbassi*, *hrudka* (*sirets*), butter, *pysanki* (ornately decorated eggs for decoration), colored eggs for eating, and *kolachi*. Some people may add candy and a bottle of wine (or other items of Lenten sacrifice) to their baskets.

After the foods are placed in the basket, an embroidered cloth cover is placed over them and a blessed candle is fastened upright near the basket handle.

For the first-timers who have never put together a Paschal basket, let alone prepared foods for it, the whole process can be mystifying. Every cook has his or her favorite way of preparing these foods and of measuring the ingredients for them, and asking for recipes can result in confusion.

To take some of the mystery out of the preparation of the traditional foods, here are a few recipes gleaned from my own experience and a few Slavic cookbooks.

open end with string, placing string very close to top of ball. Caution: This will be hot. Hang over sink until cool. Remove cheesecloth when cool; wrap and refrigerate. (The whey from the *hrudka* can be saved and used when making *pascha*. To conserve the whey, place the colander over a large pot before pouring mixture into cheesecloth.)

## Pascha

3 cups scalded milk, or enough scalded milk added to whey from *hrudka* to make 3 cups  
 ½ tsp. salt  
 6 beaten eggs  
 ½ cup lukewarm water  
 ½ cup sugar  
 1 cup melted butter  
 ½ large cake yeast or equivalent portion of dry yeast  
 12 to 14 cups flour.

In a large bowl, combine milk, sugar, with butter and cool to lukewarm. Save 2 tablespoons of the eggs and add the rest of the eggs to the milk mixture. In a separate bowl, crumble yeast in water and let stand for 10 minutes. Add to above mixture. Add flour, about 2 cups at a time, until the dough can be handled.

Knead on floured board for 15 minutes. Place dough in greased bowl, grease top and let rise in a warm place for about 1½ hours.

be saved and shaped into designs (plaits, crosses, etc.) and placed on top of the unbaked *paschy*. These fancy shapes can be prevented from scorching in the oven by placing aluminum foil on top of the *pascha* during baking.

## Hrin

(Beets with Horseradish)

8 cans whole beets, drained

3 bottles horseradish (Do not use creamed horseradish.)

Grind beets, using fine grinder attachment. The juice can be saved for soup. Add horseradish to beets; mix well, refrigerate. An empty horseradish jar (washed, label removed and dipped in boiling water to sterilize it) can be filled with the mixture and placed in the Easter basket. The jar's cap can be disguised with aluminum foil, thus hiding any advertisement.

## Kolachi

(Nut and Poppyseed)

8 egg yolks  
 8 cups flour  
 ½ lb. butter  
 1 cake yeast  
 1 cup sugar  
 2 cups scalded milk  
 4 tbs. shortening

Beat eggs and sugar. Melt butter and shortening in hot milk, saving ½ cup for the yeast. Dissolve yeast in lukewarm milk and let stand for a few minutes. Combine both mixtures in large bowl.

Add flour and mix well with hands until dough leaves the hands. Refrigerate overnight. In the morning, divide the dough into eight balls and let rise for one hour. Roll out on floured board and spread with filling. Roll up gently, tucking in ends.

Bake at 350 degrees until brown, about 45 minutes.

Brush tops of rolls, prior to putting into oven, with an egg-milk mixture. Doing so produces beautifully browned, shiny rolls.

## Nut Filling

1 lb. ground walnuts  
 1 cup canned milk  
 ½ cup sugar  
 2 eggs  
 ½ cup honey (optional)

Combine sugar and nuts. Beat eggs and add to mixture, add honey and milk. Cook over medium heat, stirring constantly. Bring to boil, remove from stove; let cool. Roll out dough to ½-inch thickness; brush with butter; place filling on dough and roll up. Bake.

## Poppyseed Filling

1 lb. ground poppyseed  
 ½ cup honey  
 ½ cup sugar  
 2 Tsp. butter, melted  
 ½ cup milk

Combine sugar with poppyseed. Add melted butter and then add honey and milk. Cook over medium heat, stirring constantly until blended. Cool and spread over dough that has been rolled out to ½-inch thickness and brushed with butter. Roll up and bake.

## Ham

The ham is decorated and baked according to your favorite recipe. How large a ham you buy and use depends on how many people you are serving. For a 20-pound ham: Cut it in half, decorate the halves, bake them and place one of them in the basket.

## Kolbasi

Again, the amount of kolbasi purchased depends on how many eager eaters you are serving.

Place the kolbasi in a pan, cover with water and boil for about 45 minutes. Some cooks, after the kolbasi is boiled, place a few into a baking pan and sprinkle them with about 2 tablespoons of brown sugar and honey. This is then popped into the oven for about 15 minutes at 350 degrees. Cool before refrigerating.

## Butter

If you prefer not to use already prepared butter for the Easter feasting, the butter can be made by whipping heavy cream. Use either one pint or one-half pint heavy whipping cream. Place in bowl and mix with hand beater until butter forms. Place butter in a small fancy bowl and decorate for use in Easter basket.

(The above is a revised version of an article that originally appeared in the April 10, 1979, edition of the *Homestead, PA, Daily Messenger*.)



## Hrudka (Sirets)

1 doz. eggs  
 1 or 2 tsp. vanilla  
 1 qt. milk  
 ½ cup sugar

Combine all ingredients in a white enameled pan. Cook over medium to low heat, stirring constantly, until mixture curdles. Pour mixture into a colander that is lined with several thicknesses of cheesecloth. Once mixture is drained, pick it up, cheesecloth and all, and shape into a ball by twisting the top part of the cheesecloth. Tightly tie

Punch down, and let rise a second time for about 45 minutes.

After second rising, shape into four balls and place into greased pans. Small, 1½ quart enameled saucepans can be used for baking. Let rise. Brush tops with 2 tablespoons eggs to which some milk has been added. To achieve that glazed appearance on the loaves, brush tops several times prior to removing them from the oven. Bake at 325 degrees for about 1 hour.

Note: Before placing dough in pans, about 1 cup of the dough can



# How to Put Together a Traditional Easter Basket



mima farahat



**PASCHA** - The Easter Bread (pronounced "Paska.") A sweet, yeast bread rich in eggs, butter, etc. Symbolic of Christ Himself, Who is our "True Bread." Usually a round loaf baked with a golden crust, decorated with a symbol indicative of Christ. Sometimes a cross † of dough is placed on top, encircled by a plait, giving it a crowned effect; or the Greek abbreviations for the name of Christ, IC XC (Jesus Christ), may be used. The letters XB are an abbreviation for "Christ is Risen".

**HAM** (Slav, "Šunka" – pron. Shoon-ka) - the flesh meat popular with the Slavs as the main dish for Holy Pascha, because of its richness and symbolic of the great joy and abundance of Easter. Some may prefer lamb or veal. These meats are usually well roasted or cooked ahead of time so that the festivity of the day will not be burden anyone with food preparation, and that all may be free to enjoy the Feast.



**SAUSAGE** (Slav, "Kolbassi" pron. Kol-bus-i). A spicy, sausage made of pork products and garlic; indicative of God's favour and generosity.

**EGGS** (Slav. "Pysanky" pron. Pi-sun-ki). Hard-boiled eggs brightly decorated with symbols and designs made with beeswax, indicative of new life and resurrection.



**HORSERADISH** (Slav, "Chrin" pron. Khrin) Horseradish mixed with grated red beets symbolic of the Passion of Christ still in our minds, yet sweetened with some sugar because of the Resurrection. The bittersweet red coloured mixture reminds us of the sufferings Christ endured for us

**CHEESE** (Slav "Hrudka" or "Sirets" pron hrood-ka or si-rets) A custard-type cheese shaped into a ball, with a slight sweet taste indicative of the moderation that Christians should have in all things. Also, creamed cheese is placed in a small dish. Both cheeses are decorated with symbols (IC XC, or XB, or the cross) using cloves or pepper balls.



**BUTTER** (Slav, "Maslo.") This favourite dairy product is often shaped into a figure of a Lamb, or small cross and decorated as the cheese. This reminds us of the goodness of Christ that we should have towards all things.

**BACON** (Slav "Slanina") A piece of uncooked bacon cured with spices. Symbolic of the super-abundance of God's mercy and loving-kindness to us.



**SALT** (in Slav, "Sol") A condiment which gives flavor and preserves food. It is a reminder of Christ's words, "You are the salt of the earth." As Christians, we are called to be the "salt of the earth," to give "flavor" and meaning to human life on earth by living according to the Gospel; and thus, to preserve human life from moral corruption and decay.

**THE EMBROIDERED PASCHAL CLOTH.** The articles mentioned above are placed in a wicker basket and a ribbon or bow is tied to the handle. A decorated candle is placed in the basket and is lit at the time of blessing. A linen cover, usually embroidered with an image of the risen Christ, the cross or another appropriate symbol, together with the words "Christ is Risen - Truly He is Risen," is placed over the food when brought to Church. Before the blessing, the cover is removed, set on the ground or table, and the basket is placed upon the cloth for the blessing.

The above is a description of TRADITIONAL EASTER FOODS included in an Easter Basket in Central and Eastern Europe. However, you may substitute Traditional Easter Foods with foods common to your own country of origin. Almost every nationality has its own type of sausage or prepared meat. The important thing is that after the Great Fast, the first food you eat should be blessed food, which should be eaten and enjoyed together as a family on EASTER SUNDAY, after church services. Another popular custom is to let children have (or make up themselves) their own baskets, to instill in them the tradition for the future. These may be filled with eggs, chocolates, toys, etc.

## A JOURNEY FROM HOLY WEEK TO THE RESURRECTION...

...continued from page 1

The priest begins Vespers and the Divine Liturgy in dark vestments, but before the Gospel he changes into white vestments because in the Gospel of the day, Christ's resurrection is already mentioned. During the Divine Liturgy, instead of the Cherubic Hymn another hymn is sung: "Let all mortal flesh keep silence."

### The Resurrection Period

For a long time, by many prayers, liturgical services and ceremonies, the Church has been preparing us for the glorious day of Christ's Resurrection, Pascha. Hoping that during Lent everybody had an opportunity to be cleansed from his personal sins, the Church now celebrates externally and with beautifully joyous ceremonies the final triumph and life-giving Resurrection of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. After the long ages of darkness brought about by the Fall, after the seemingly endless expectation of the prophets, after the thirty hidden years and the three years of public life, after the frightful passion which had seemed to be the end of all hope, after the three days in the depth of the tomb, behold: Christ is risen! The time

sings, *Christ is risen!* As he reaches the words, "and to those in the graves He granted life," he strikes the doors with the cross. They are then opened and he enters, followed by the entire congregation. The priest in front of the closed doors represents the angel announcing the joyful news of the resurrection. The people represent the myrrh-bearing women. The striking of the doors with the cross and their opening symbolize the fact that Christ by His death on the cross opened for us the gates of Heaven.

The priest then comes to the altar and, after singing the Great Litany, begins the Paschal Canon, the Canon of the Resurrection. This Canon, composed by Saint John Damascene (675-748 AD) is a series of hymns written according to certain rules, hence its name "canon (rule)." It is a type of liturgical poetry, especially interesting because of its specific form and content. Similar hymns appeared in the East already around the middle of the seventh century. It replaced the kontakion, a type of liturgical poetry composed of 24 short odes or strophes with the purpose of conveying to the people a certain religious message.

**Having suffered the passion for us,  
Jesus Christ, Son of God,  
have mercy on us!**

of weeping is over; now is the time for joy. Christ's resurrection is the greatest miracle. It is the most divine and the least human, for it took place when the Man-Christ was in the grave. We now know that Christ is God and we rejoice.

### Resurrection

The festivities of Pascha begin with the Resurrection Matins. There is a procession around the church during which the people chant the troparion: "Your Resurrection, O Christ our Savior, the angels praise in Heaven. Grant us on earth with pure heart to glorify You." Wherever it is not possible to have a procession outside of the church, it is held inside. This procession symbolizes the myrrh-bearing women who "very early in the morning, the first day of the week" came to the tomb to anoint the body of the Lord.

Following the procession, Resurrection Matins begin. Preceded by candle bearers and by bearers of the processional cross, church banners, an icon of the resurrection and the Gospel book, the priest goes to the main church doors and from outside, after incensing the closed doors, he intones: "Glory be to the holy, consubstantial and indivisible Trinity always, now and ever, and forever and ever." After the people answer with "Amen," the priest sings the glorious Paschal troparion: "Christ is risen from the dead, by death He conquered death, and to those in the graves, He granted life. After the celebrant finishes, the whole congregation bursts into a joyous, jubilant singing of the same troparion twice. But all this is only the beginning of the jubilation. The priest sings to the Risen Christ, "Let God arise and let His enemies be scattered, and let those who hate Him flee from before His face." The congregation replies spontaneously: "Christ is risen from the dead - *Christos voskrese!*" "As smoke vanishes so let them vanish, as wax melts before a fire," the priest continues. Again a thundering *Christ is risen!* closes the priest's intonation. "So let the wicked perish at the presence of God and let the righteous ones rejoice," proclaims the celebrant. Another *Christ is risen!* Then, "This is the day which the Lord has made, let us be glad and rejoice in it." Another *Christ is risen!* In conclusion the celebrant again

The Canon of the Resurrection, as any other canon, is composed of nine odes, with the exception of the second one, each containing three or four troparia, the first of which is called an "irmos." The first troparion or "irmos" contains the chief theme of the ode and serves as a model for other troparia of that particular ode. The Canon of the Resurrection is a hymn of victory, both an expression and a description of the joy and fruits of Christ's victory as crowned by His glorious Resurrection. As the Jewish Passover was celebrated to commemorate the exodus of the Jews from Egyptian captivity, so also the Christian Pascha is an exodus "from death to life and from the earth to heaven." A certain victorious atmosphere pervades the entire canon. Perhaps the third troparion of the first ode expresses this mood best: "Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth exult. Let, moreover, the whole universe, both visible and invisible, celebrate; for Christ is risen, joy eternal."

The prototype of the ninth ode is the song of the Mother of God, "My soul magnifies the Lord" and re-



calls the Angelic Salutation: "The angel exclaimed to her, full of grace: Rejoice, O pure Virgin! And again I say: rejoice! Your Son is risen from the grave on the third day and has raised the dead. O People, rejoice!" The angel brings the joy of the Resurrection to Mary

also, and this joy is indeed a double one: Her Son is risen and by His resurrection has saved others. The words of the ninth ode are a response to words of the Mother of God, in which she expresses her humility in the yard of Zachary's house: "He has regarded the lowliness of His handmaid; for, behold, henceforth all generations shall call me blessed; because He who is mighty has done great things for me." (Luke 1 :48)

The Canon of the Resurrection ends with the hymns of Lauds, which exhort us "to sing hymns to Your (Christ's) saving passion and glorify Your Resurrection." Christ must be glorified on this day for "He has endured crucifixion, overthrown death and risen



from the dead." Today, "we praise Your divine condescension and sing hymns to You, O Christ! In order to save the world, You were born of a virgin without leaving the Father. You suffered as man and willingly endured crucifixion, and You rose from the tomb. O Lord, glory to You."

The Divine Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom has a slight deviation from its ordinary celebration. Immediately after the initial invocation, the celebrant sings the Paschal troparion in order to emphasize the joy and solemn happiness brought by the glorious Resurrection of Christ. The Gospel, taken from John 1:1-17, is divided into twelve verses. After reading each verse, the celebrant pauses and all the bells are rung. The Gospel is read in various languages, signifying that the redemptive work of Christ applies to all peoples, to the whole world. During the Eucharistic commemorations, instead of the usual hymn in honor of the Mother of God, "It is truly proper to glorify you..." the Angelic Salutation from the Resurrection Service with the irmos of the ninth ode is sung: "Shine, shine, O new Jerusalem..." After the Communion, all hymns are replaced by the Paschal troparion.

A special feature of Pascha is the blessing of the Paschal food. Cleansed in body and soul, it is only right that our food also should be blessed so that we may in every way enjoy our pasch - great, solemn and sanctified - the feast of Christ's glorious and victorious Resurrection.

During Vespers, instead of the usual introductory prayers and Psalm 103, we repeat many times the Paschal troparion because the Resurrection of Christ is the crowning point of all the prophecies of the Old Testament. During the procession around the altar the priest carries the Gospel book and after the prokimenon reads the section which describes the apparition of the Risen Christ on the evening of the first Paschal Sunday and the doubting of Saint Thomas the Apostle. At the end of Vespers, the Paschal sticheras are sung while the people kiss the cross.

Pascha is celebrated publicly as a solemn feast for three days. Liturgically, it is observed for the whole week, called "Bright Week", and its post-festive period lasts until the Ascension, that is, for 39 days.

(From: *The Liturgical Year of the Byzantine Rite* by Father Basil Shereghy, 1968, Seminary Press. Imprimatur: Most Reverend Stephen Kocisko, DD)



# LIFE, LOVE, AND THE HUMAN PERSON

By Ann M. Koshute, MTS

## THE JOY OF PASCHA AND THE SPIRIT OF THE FAST

We've made it once again through the Fast to reach the joy of Pascha. Self-denial and solemnity give way to feasting and the good news that *Christ is Risen!* These forty days can feel like a lifetime as we long for that cheeseburger or latte and gather the energy to make it to Lenten services after a long day. Once it's over, though, we may find ourselves feeling a little sentimental, having felt a deeper closeness with God, appreciated the extra silence and break from social media, television, or other distractions. Life returns to "normal" now, and if we aren't careful, we may already fall back into routines – and perhaps some bad habits – almost as if the Fast was a speedbump on the busy highway of our lives. It's understandable, but does it have to (or should it) be this way?

Recently I was reading some homilies from Saint John Chrysostom, perhaps the most recognizable Church Father to many of us. He is the "Golden Mouth" on account of his rhetorical skills; so popular and engaging that people would listen to him for hours as he preached. He had strong opinions yet also spoke gently and reverently about the life and faith of everyday Christians. He was a prolific preacher, addressing marriage and family, Scripture, the vocation to priesthood, and more. Apart from the familiar Divine Liturgy, he also gave a famous homily on Pascha, inviting everyone to celebrate the Resurrection, whether they fasted diligently, or only made sacrifices at the last minute. Many of us have read it, or heard a priest read it from the pulpit, but if you don't know it, I highly recommend a quick internet search to find it.

Chrysostom's *Homilies on Genesis* are an example of his preaching during Lent, expounding on the story of Creation and the Fall. They are beautiful meditations (sometimes a bit humorous to modern ears) and easily found in print or online. Recently I picked up a copy of *Old Testament Homilies, Volume One*, and in particular I read his "Homilies on Hannah." Hannah suffered terribly with being unable to conceive a child. One day she cried out in distress, promising that if God gave her a son, she would offer the child back to Him. Her prayer was answered, Samuel grew up to be a pivotal figure in Salvation History, anointing Saul, and then David, King of Israel. Chrysostom gave this homily during the Paschal season, just a few days before the feast of the Ascension, but what I found so interesting while reading it was how he began by referring back to the Fast. Obviously, the Resurrection of Christ is a time for rejoicing, but Chrysostom reminds us that the joy of our redemption does not mean forgetting all that came before – or the long road toward Heaven that we still must walk.

Chrysostom opens Homily One with the analogy of having guests in our home for a few days. We eat together, talk, and enjoy each other's company. After a time, the guests leave, and we go back to our usual routines. But then, as we're setting the table for a meal, we think back on that time, and we miss them. Similarly, we should "miss" fasting so that its effects remain part of us. He says:

"Let us do exactly this in the case of fasting as well: it lodged with us for forty days; we gave it a warm welcome and sent it on its way. So now that we are on the point of laying a spiritual table, let us recall it and all the good things that came to us from it. I mean, it is not only the presence of fasting but also the memory of fasting that can be of the greatest benefit."

Chrysostom goes on to urge his listeners to continue living in moderation, avoiding drunkenness and the like. But it is the sentiment above that struck me as I read it during the heart of the Fast. Lent is a special time, with beautiful hymns and services, and a sense of solemnity makes us more prayerful. It is quite restful and freeing, because once we get over the discomfort of fasting, or abstaining from certain foods or activities, we begin to feel more like ourselves; more like the persons God created us to be. That's not to say that fasting makes us perfect, but we're better able to progress along the way of holiness than when we thoughtlessly give in to every appetite or slowly let prayer slip down to the bottom of our priority list. Why wouldn't we want to take the "memory" of fasting and somehow incorporate it into our lives beyond the Great Fast?

Chrysostom asks his listeners to keep the memory of fasting, "not to oblige you to fast, but to persuade you [not to] behave...like people released from their bonds and freed from harsh prison say[ing] to one another, 'We have finally come to the end of the awful ocean of fasting.'" This is something to take to prayer, because if we view the Fast only as a time of constraint, we may miss out on an important opportunity for transformation. And if the end of the Fast leads us to fall back into our old ways, what have we gained?

The whole point of fasting, praying, and being more charitable than we would otherwise is to remind us that we're not the center of the universe. God must always be first, and it is upon Him that we must depend, and to Whom we should be grateful for all things. Gratitude, deeper intimacy with God, and a desire to become more fully human are fruits of the Fast that we should continue cultivating and harvesting not just for a season, but every day of our lives. **ECL**



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## PRIESTLY REFLECTIONS

Father Paul Varchola West

### CHEATING THE INTERVAL—A THESIS ON PROSTOPINIJE

I was chatting with Bishop Kurt recently and he suggested that I share with our readers what my education background was prior to entering our Seminary and, more specifically, the work I did for the completion of my M.Div. that combined my previous scholarly research with the new knowledge I had attained during my intellectual formation at BCS.

As many of you may already know, before answering the call to attend seminary and pursue a vocation to the priesthood, my academic training and career was in music. I hold a Bachelor of Music in Music Theory with a minor in Microtonal Intonation Studies and a Master of Fine Arts in Music Composition from one of the premier art institutions in the country. Truth be told, I did enjoy a rather successful composition and academic career, performing all over North America, along with my own compositions being premiered state-side as well as in the Czech Republic, having a piano tuning method I developed employed in concert halls in the U.S.A. and the U.K., and even having my scholarly writing published by Oxford University Press and University of Rochester Press. Being recognized as one of the leading scholars of the 20th Century American composer Harry Partch, I currently sit on the Board of Directors of the Harry Partch Commission. To top it all off, I am even the humble recipient of a 2013 Grammy Award Nomination. Not too bad, right?!? The Lord, however, was calling me in a different direction and I finally chose to yank the cotton out of my ears and listen.

While completing my priestly formation, however, I decided to dust off the music parts of my brain and put my academic prowess to work to tackle something I had been pondering for quite some time: what implications arise from the

translation of the plainchant tradition of Prostopinije into modern Western music notation and the subsequent imposition of modern Western performance practice and tonal perceptions upon a music that, at its inception, is rather divorced from the current milieu in which it is being executed. This being a rather ambitious topic for an M.Div. thesis project, I did what any decent writer would do, and I assembled a team of readers at BCS composed of some of the best minds (and kindest souls) I have ever met and, having taken over a significant portion of a corner of the library, I got to reading and writing.

The work that would ultimately be born from this germ of intellectual curiosity would be a Ph.D. level, 160-page cyclone of philosophy and music theory bearing the title *Cheating the Interval: A Philosophic and Harmonic Investigation of Prostopinije and its Speculative Function within Divine Worship*. Great... so what does this all mean and what is this work all about.

Let us think of the teal Faithful's Book (pew book) as being the last call in an epic game of "telephone." Seemingly, all we have to go on is what the previous person said, taking that as truth; however, what happens most of the time is that as the game progresses changes to the original message are made, some innocently, and some not so innocently. We tend to think of the current iteration of Prostopinije found in the Faithful's Book to be a (fairly) accurate transliteration from the Tserkovnoje Prostopinije (1906) compiled by John Bokšai and Joseph Malinič. While this very well may be superficially true, what needs to be factored in is that this "source text" for the current Faithful's Book is simply a snapshot of what was being sung in the Užhorod Cathedral around that time and not a representation of the broader plainchant tradition of Podkar-

patska Rus' and its multitude of local variants both in melodic contour and ethnomusicological perception. I certainly wasn't derived from whole cloth and I really wanted to know what the original message down the phone line was! This is where two specific questions arise. The first, "we didn't sing this hymn like this when I was growing up," and the second (primarily from learned cantors), what is with this key signature and why is this line so impossibly modal and oddly difficult to sing." The latter question is far more important, but the former certainly adds its fair share to the discussion, albeit on a far smaller scale.

From this point of departure, my work answers the question of why certain melodic lines are oddly (and perhaps unnecessarily) "chromatic" and what this means in the overall picture of how we literally perceive the sounds being sung. The work is structured in such a way that it tackles the issue in the following manner.

#### History and Philosophy

I trace that plainchant tradition back to its earliest extant manuscripts and demonstrate the point that when the source material was first composed and codified, the cultural interpretation of the music itself would have been completely different from how we would conceive and perceive it today. Using the philosophical works and reasoning of Pythagoras, Plato, and Porphyry, I make the argument that we who proclaim to practice an "Ancient Faith" must relearn how to think like our "ancient" forebears.

#### Music Theory

I undertake an in-depth analysis of a multitude of samples from a large swath of sources, strip away the debris

of modern imposition of terminology and tonality and use a more accurate and philosophical means to analyze the tonal structures of the music. Ultimately, considering such things as an oral tradition of a purely vocal music, I dare to retrace our steps and retranslate specific examples to gain a clearer image of what these melodies may actually sound like.

#### Translation and Performance Practice

Employing a new scheme of notation that I developed as an amalgam of several historic and modern tuning schemes, I strive to portray a better representation of the melodic material itself and a more universal method for both historical preservation and a simplified, more consistent performance practice. Furthermore, I take a look at some Church documents to prove that striving for authentic and traditional performance practice is most definitely something we, the Faithful, must strive to achieve.

So... if you're a giant nerd like me, and you like Classical and Neoplatonic Philosophy, physics, small number ratios, wacky accidentals, history, reading in Cyrillic, and taking on way too much... then you will love this book!

As of now, only one lonesome and dusty hard copy of *Cheating the Interval* exists and that is in the Seminary Library at BCS. I do hope and desire to expand the volume and have it properly published, but as one can imagine publishing interest for a work like this isn't always easy to come by. So, until that day, you'll have to travel to Pittsburgh to read it...or contact me and I will happily help you out!

Thank you for coming to my TED Talk!!! **ECL**



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# SEASONAL REFLECTIONS

Father Ronald Hatton



## THE MYSTERY OF OUR SALVATION

*You annulled the sentence of the tree of disobedience, O Savior, by being nailed willingly to the Tree of the Cross. And by descending into Hades, O Mighty One, as God You destroyed the bonds of death. Wherefore, we worship Your resurrection from the dead, while crying out to You: O Almighty Lord, glory be to You. – Vespers for Bright Tuesday*

*O Lord, when the grave had been sealed by the lawless ones, You came forth from the tomb in the same manner as You were born of the Theotokos. Your incorporeal angels did not know how You were incarnate; the soldiers who guarded You did not perceive when You arose: for both these things are sealed fast against the inquisitive, but the wonders are made manifest to those who worship the mystery of faith. Grant to us who praise it exceeding joy and great mercy. –Matins for Bright Thursday*

We come once again to the season of great mysteries: The Mystery of the Cross and the Mystery of the Resurrection. All those who call themselves Christian contemplate these mysteries to one degree or another, struggling with why Christ had to suffer betrayal, arrest, desertion, public mockery, and condemnation to death, and a horrible death on the cross. They also struggle with how (and even if)

the Resurrection occurred and all the attendant mysteries that happened after the Resurrection: the appearance to His disciples although the doors in the Upper Room were locked, His sudden appearance and disappearance to the disciples on the road to Emmaus, and yet the mystery of His appearance being a physical one. So much for our minds to take in and to process. We are called to belief, but in this day and age, what we are called to believe is, in worldly terms, beyond belief. And so this season is also a time to reaffirm our faith and belief in the One Whom we follow. We must remember that even during His three-year ministry, lesser struggles confronted His disciples: how can this Man give us His flesh to eat (cf. John 6, especially verses 52 and 66)? They all ran away on the night He was arrested, and Peter denied he knew Him, even after professing, even boasting that, even if everyone else fainted away, he would never betray Him.

And so, I have chosen these two hymns for us to ponder. I cannot go too deeply into the mysteries here but maybe I can offer food for serious thought. First is the cross. My favorite “theological” Christmas song is “I Wonder as I Wander.” “How Jesus the Savior did come for to die/For poor on’ry people like you and like I...” The first hymn above answers that for us in that, as one tree, in the Garden of Eden, led to sin and

death through the first Adam, so the second tree led to the end of sin and death through the second Adam. As our Anaphora of St. Basil the Great so beautifully puts it, “For since, through a man, sin entered the world, and through sin, death, so it pleased Your only-begotten Son... to condemn sin in His flesh, so that those who are dead in Adam might be brought to life in Him, Your Christ.” Why? “For God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.” (John 3:16).

We also contemplate His resurrection. Nothing is so controversial as the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. How many people do not believe based on this one part of the Christian Faith? And yet it is central to the Faith. The Holy Apostle Paul says, “But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ has not been raised; if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain. We are even found to be misrepresenting God, because we testified of God that He raised Christ, Whom He did not raise if it is true that the dead are not raised. For if the dead are not raised, then Christ has not been raised. If Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile, and you are still in your sins. Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. If for this life only we

have hoped in Christ, we are of all men most to be pitied” (I Cor. 15: 13-19). There are those who believe He never really died on the cross; others hold to the story that His disciples stole His body, in the same manner as is related in Matthew 28: 11-15. But we who believe are offered this mystery as it is presented in the second hymn above: in the same manner as Christ was born of the Virgin Mother without violating her virginity, so too was His rising from the dead. “[B]ut the wonders are made manifest to those who worship the mystery of faith.”

But we do hold to this faith. Again, going back to I Corinthians: “But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep. For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive” (vv. 20-22). Paul, and all the apostles, had to constantly re-teach the early Christians this fact, and we must be reminded of this teaching every Easter, every Sunday.

This is the season of the Great Mystery of Christ. This is the season of faith. This is the season of belief. **BCL**



## SAINTS CYRIL AND METHODIUS ANNUAL LECTURE SERIES

“The Nicene Confession of the Lordship of Christ”  
to be Livestreamed May 6, 2025

Glory to Jesus Christ!

Our 25th annual academic lecture is to be delivered by Fr. Khaled Anatalios, PhD, STL, MA at 7 PM E.D.T. on Tuesday, May 6, 2025. We are eager for you to join us!

Fr. Khaled plans to present to students and supporters of Saints Cyril and Methodius Byzantine Catholic Seminary: an interpretation of the Council of Nicaea as a contestation about the lordship of Christ. This interpretation will lead to some recommendations for how the Nicene confession can help us to answer the question today of what it means to say that Jesus is Lord.

All are welcome to attend this lecture virtually via  
the Seminary website. [www.bcs.edu](http://www.bcs.edu)

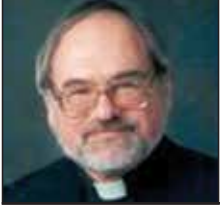
The lecture can also be accessed live or at a later  
time from archives on the B.C.S.

YouTube channel.

Fr. Khaled Anatalios, a priest of the Melkite Catholic Eparchy of Newton (N. America), is the John A. O'Brien Professor of Theology at the University of Notre Dame in South Bend, Indiana and a fellow at the Tantur Ecumenical Institute (Jerusalem). Fr. Khaled wife's name is Meredith, who also has her master's in theology and together they have four children. His primary field of study is in the history of Christianity, with specific research and training interests in Early Christian Doctrine, Theological Method, and Biblical Exegesis. A particular focus of his work is the engagement between early Christian theological reflection and contemporary theological concerns.



A graduate with his PhD from Boston College, Fr. Khaled's most well-known work in systematic theology is *Deification through the Cross, An Eastern Christian Theology of Salvation* (2020) and his best-known scholarly work in the history of Christianity, which makes contributions on the all-important figure of St. Athanasius the Great, is *Retrieving Nicaea: The Development and Meaning of Trinitarian Doctrine* (2018). He is also the author of *Feasts for the Kingdom, Sermons for the Liturgical Year* (2023) and the editor of *The Trinity in the Life of the Church* (2014).



# THE BYZANTINE LITURGY

By Archpriest David Petras, SEOD

## YOU ARE NOT YOUR OWN

A sacramental mystery is a ritual action that signifies the place of the Paschal mystery in the life of a believer. The Paschal mystery is Christ's victory over sin and death through his death on the cross and resurrection. The death and resurrection of Christ reveals that ultimately only one who "loses" his or her life can gain it. The "loss of life" in this temporal life is the death to sin and passion that destroy the image of God in us. The celebration of a sacramental mystery is a specific way of shaping Christ's death and resurrection in the way we live which accomplishes in reality our death to sin and evil passion and our deification. The key here is the specific way. A ritual must by the symbols used signify the death and resurrection in such a way that by the power of the Holy Spirit, God works the mystery of his death and resurrection in us. One of the sacramental mysteries of the Church is called Holy Orders, or Ordination, or the Imposition of Hands. This means that when a Christian is ordained to the role of deacon, presbyter, or bishop, he dies to sin, which in this case is any care or desire that would hinder him in giving himself wholly to the service of the people of God. One renounces one's own selfishness in order to serve the Church. Saint Paul said, "you are not your own?" (1 Corinthians 6:20). He did not apply this to a Church office, but to all Christians, but it does apply in a most fitting way to those who are called to service to the people of God.

The community has a need for people to celebrate the mysteries, to give spiritual guidance, to preach the gospel, to teach, instruct and baptize, to proclaim the forgiveness of sins, and other services. The ordained servant of God is someone who is consecrated to these tasks by the commission of the Church and cannot allow any care or desire to interfere with his mission. The "resurrection" in this sacramental mystery is deification. For the deacon, presbyter, and bishop, this means a particular identity with Christ for the sake of the community. Because of the mystery of the incarnation, the ordained minister is some way "stands in the place of Christ." Obviously, this does not mean that other faithful cannot be conformed to the image of Christ, only that for the sake of service to the people of God, the ordained cleric acquires a specific identity with Christ, so that through his service others can also be united with Christ.

In the Byzantine rite, there are five orders: lector, subdeacon, deacon, presbyter (priest) and bishop. The orders of lector and subdeacon are not considered part of the sacramental mystery. They are sometimes called "minor orders," to distinguish them from the major orders of deacon, presbyter, and bishop. There is an essential difference

in the way they are celebrated: Minor orders are bestowed outside the altar in the nave of the church. Major orders are given inside the sanctuary, the altar, and all begin with the words, "Divine grace, which heals all infirmities..."

There are Greek technical words, for major orders it is cheirotonia, and for minor orders it is cheirothesia. Both words mean "imposition of hands." Cheirotonia, though, means the imposition of hands for a sacramental order, and cheirothesia means the imposition of hands for a function within the Church. The Roman Church does have what are called "minor orders," but these offices are not bestowed with an imposition of hands. The orders of bishop, priest and deacon are full sacramental rites. The person ordained takes part in the Paschal mystery of death and resurrection, that is, of death to oneself to give himself entirely to service to God's people. The lesser orders are a blessing to serve a function in the community of the Church.

The sacramental mysteries of the Church are open to all the faithful. Everyone must receive the basic sacraments of baptism, chrismation and eucharist. These are considered essential to life in God. Our Lord taught, "Amen, amen, I say to you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit," (John 3:5), and then also taught, "Amen, amen, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you do not have life within you." (John 6:53). Some may have questions about this. In the Byzantine Church, baptism and chrismation, the gift of the Spirit, and Holy Communion, necessary for spiritual life, are always given together. It is possible that a person may die without chrismation and Communion, if baptism has to be given in emergency by a person who is not a priest. The Roman Church delays confirmation, the sacrament of the Spirit, and Communion until a person has reached the age of reason, so it is possible that a child might die without these sacraments but is still fully saved.

The other sacraments are given for specific needs and may not be absolutely needed, penance, for grave sins committed after baptism; anointing, for sickness, are sometimes necessary for nearly all people. Marriage is needed only for those called to common life of matrimony. Orders, however, are only for a few who are called to life service to the Church. They are nevertheless universal rites, for they are necessary for the spiritual life of all Christians. They are recognitions that our lives of faith, of hope, and of love are possible only by the grace of God, given by the Father, through Christ and in the Holy Spirit. Saint Paul wrote, "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not from you; it is the gift of God." (Ephesians 2:8). By faith he means not only having an opinion about the existence of God, but our free offering of ourselves to God, who works in us and makes us holy. **ECL**



DECREE

For the Opening of the Jubilee Year 2025

Blessed be the Holy Consubstantial and Undivided Trinity, in the name of the unoriginate Father, the beloved Son Jesus Christ, and the life creating and reviving Holy Spirit. Amen.

My dear friends in Jesus Christ,

The Pope of Rome Francis has declared a Holy Year for all of us, as popes have done from many centuries. The custom is from the Jubilee Year that God ordered for his chosen people, that they should rest every seventh day, that the land should rest every seventh year, and that after seven cycles of years, that is after forty nine years, the fiftieth year should be a time of celebration, for thanking the almighty God for blessing the earth, and for forgiveness of debts and reconciliation.

St. John the Beloved Disciple tells us that to all who receive Jesus, and to those who believe in the name of Jesus, He gave the power to become children of God.

The Holy Father, using the keys given to Peter by Our Lord, and using his power to bind and loose on earth, knowing that God will bind and loose in heaven, has given to all of us the power to obtain a plenary indulgence, the remission of all the temporal punishment due to us for our lives of sins, provided that we repent of these sins, and ask for forgiveness in the Sacramental Mystery of Confession, and receive the Holy Eucharist, and make a pilgrimage to one of the sites designated for this purpose.

We can make our pilgrimage by traveling to the Eternal City of Rome and visiting a designated church, or by visiting churches in Assisi or Pompeii or Loreto or Padua. In addition, the Holy Father has empowered your bishop to designate pilgrimage churches in our own Eparchy of Passaic.

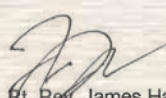
Taking into consideration the vast distances in our Eparchy and the spiritual needs of the people, as Bishop of Passaic, I designate the following churches as pilgrimage destinations:

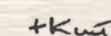
The Cathedral of St. Michael in Passaic, New Jersey, which is already designated by the Pope, Furthermore, I designate

St. Mary Byzantine Catholic Church in Freeland, Pennsylvania,  
Holy Ghost Byzantine Catholic Church in Jessup, Pennsylvania,  
St. Andrew Byzantine Catholic Church in Westbury, New York,  
St. Nicholas Byzantine Catholic Church in Danbury, Connecticut,  
Epiphany of Our Lord Byzantine Catholic Church in Annandale, Virginia,  
Epiphany of Our Lord Byzantine Catholic Church in Roswell, Georgia,  
St. Nicholas Byzantine Catholic Church in Orlando, Florida, and  
Our Lady of Perpetual Help Byzantine Catholic Church in Toms River, New Jersey.

St. Paul tells us that the great virtues are Faith, Hope, and Love, and the greatest of these is Love. We need Faith and Hope to Love, and the Holy Father has asked us this year to pray humbly to God for a rekindling of Hope in our lives and in the world and to meditate on the beautiful virtue of Hope.

Given by my hand, this nineteenth day of January in the year of Our Lord 2025.

  
Rt. Rev. James Hayer  
Protosyncellus and Notary

  
Most Rev. Kurt Burnette  
Bishop of Passaic



## SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES

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

### PROBLEM PEOPLE AND THE CHURCH

Was there ever a parish that didn't go through the occasional conflict or seem to lose its bearings? Social events often get more energy and attention than worship, learning or charity. People maneuver for power and influence. Intentionally or unwittingly, clergy may develop fan clubs, people shop for the "right" Liturgy or social life, and every transfer provokes a little exodus in and out of a parish. Money is always a hot topic: how to make it, how to spend it and, especially, how dare anyone tell me I should be donating a certain percentage of my income?! People's personal grudges can also find their way into Church, dividing whole parishes or just creating a tense atmosphere.

These problems are as old as the Church. The Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles of Saint Paul show us that these conflicts arose right from the start. Saint Paul challenged the Apostles' authority, insisting that he too was an Apostle, equal to the Twelve, even though he had come to faith only after Jesus' Resurrection (Acts 9; 1 Corinthians 15:9-11). Paul clashed especially with Peter over the question of whether Gentile converts to Christ needed to adopt basic Jewish practices like dietary laws and circumcision (Galatians 2;

Acts 15:6-29). Paul's letters also betray his competition with Apollos, a more eloquent preacher than Paul (2 Corinthians 11:5-6; Acts 18: 24-28) who had a large following among the first Christians in Corinth (1 Corinthians 1:10-12; 3:4-6). It's hard not to hear a little hurt in Paul's voice especially in 2 Corinthians 10-12.

Was Saint Paul a difficult character? He also clashed with, of all people, Barnabas, the first member of the Jerusalem Church to accept Paul after his conversion and introduce him around the community (Acts 9:26-30). The two went on to carry out a long and fruitful preaching tour together (Acts 11:25-26; 12:25 - 15:35) until a disagreement came between them (Acts 15:36-41). At issue was a young man, John Mark (Barnabas' nephew as it turns out and perhaps the young man in Mark 14:51-52) who had disappointed Paul in a previous missionary journey and whom Barnabas wanted to take along with himself and Paul on a new mission to revisit all the churches they had founded. Paul's objection to John Mark was so strenuous that he separated from Barnabas and went off with Silas as his new companion (Acts 16ff).

The Church in Corinth, a diverse

and bustling seaport, was particularly problematic. A case of gross immorality—incest—was resolved only with a period of penance followed by tears of repentance and forgiveness (1 Corinthians 5:1-5; 2 Corinthians 2:3-11). The Liturgy there seems to have descended into chaos as too many people tried to show off their particular spiritual gifts by prophesying, speaking in tongues, and interpreting tongues all at once (1 Corinthians 14). Worst of all, the communal meal following the Eucharist came to be more important for some Christians, with the rich members dining luxuriously while the poor and enslaved members went hungry (1 Corinthians 11:17-22).

And, of course, there were issues over money. Saint Luke tells us that the first Christians in Jerusalem pooled all their resources and held all things in common (Acts 4:32-37). The married couple Annanias and Sapphira sold a field, claimed to turn over the profits to the Church but in fact held back a percentage for themselves, lying about it to Saint Peter. When Peter confronted husband and wife with their lie individually, each fell down dead (Acts 5:1-11)! Simon the Samaritan sorcerer who was baptized by Philip the Deacon fared better. When Saint Peter came to

Samaria and called down the Holy Spirit on the newly-baptized, Simon was so impressed that he offered to pay the Apostle to empower him to call down the Spirit as well. Convicted by Saint Peter's sharp rebuke, "May your money perish with you!" he was moved to repent immediately and begged for the Apostle's prayers (Acts 8:9-24).

Ugly as these moments may have been, most of them bore good fruit for the Church in the end. The disagreement between Peter and Paul provoked the first Church Council and definitively opened the Church to non-Jews. Paul's troubles at Corinth inspired the text that proves the original Church believed that Jesus Christ is truly present in the bread and wine of the Eucharist (contra later protestant denials; 1 Corinthians 11:23-34). Paul's break with John Mark paved the way for another young man, Timothy, to be trained in ministry by Paul (Acts 16:1-5; 1 and 2 Timothy). Saint Peter's rebuke of Simon the Sorcerer identified the sin of "simony"—the illicit sale of spiritual goods. In challenging the immature flaunting of spiritual gifts, Saint Paul composed his famous praise of love: 1 Corinthians 13. **ECL**

## SCHOOL OF PRAYER

Father G. Scott Boghossian



### THE PSALMS TEACH US TO TRUST GOD

The book of Psalms is the official prayer book of the Church. Verses from the Psalms appear in almost every liturgical service of the Church. The Fathers, Doctors, and Saints have commented on, memorized, and explained the psalms:

"The grace of the Holy Spirit has so ordered it, that the Psalms of David should be recited and sung night and day," says Saint John Chrysostom.

We read and pray the psalms but don't get the message. More than anything else, the Psalms teach us to trust God:

"Offer right sacrifices, and put your trust in the LORD" (Ps. 4:5), "those who know Thy name put their trust in Thee" (Ps. 9:10), "I have trusted in Thy steadfast love" (Ps. 13:5), "O my God, in Thee I trust, let me not be put to shame" (Ps. 25:2), "I have trusted in the LORD without wavering" (Ps. 26:1), "The LORD is my strength and my shield; in Him my heart trusts" (Ps. 28:7), "Thou hatest those who pay regard to vain idols; but I trust in the LORD" (Ps. 31:6), "steadfast love sur-

rounds him who trusts in the LORD" (Ps. 32:10), "Yea, our heart is glad in Him, because we trust in His holy name" (Ps. 33:21), "Trust in the LORD, and do good" (Ps. 37:3), "Commit your way to the LORD; trust in Him, and He will act" (Ps. 37:5), "Many will see and fear, and put their trust in the LORD" (Ps. 40:3), "Blessed is the man who makes the LORD his trust" (Ps. 40:4), "I trust in the steadfast love of God for ever and ever" (Ps. 52:8), "I will trust in Thee (Ps. 55:23), "When I am afraid, I put my trust in Thee" (Ps. 56:3), "in God I trust without a fear" (Ps. 56:11), "Trust in Him at all times, O people," (Ps. 62:8), "For Thou, O Lord, art my hope, my trust, O LORD, from my youth" (Ps. 71:5), "blessed is the man who trusts in Thee!" (Ps. 84:12), "save Thy servant who trusts in Thee" (Ps. 86:2), "My refuge and my fortress; my God, in whom I trust" (Ps. 91:2), "his heart is firm, trusting in the LORD" (Ps. 112:7), You who fear the LORD, trust in the LORD! (Ps. 115:11), "Those who trust in the LORD are like Mount Zion" (Ps. 125:1), "Let me hear in the morning of Thy steadfast love, for in Thee I put my trust" (Ps. 143:8).

In addition, the Psalms often articulate the spirit of trust by referring to God metaphorically: "The LORD is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer, my God, my rock, in whom I take refuge, my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold" (Ps. 18:2).

The Psalms and all of Holy Scripture teach us to trust in God. Our Lord teaches us to trust in God throughout the four Gospels, but especially in the Sermon on the Mount. "I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you shall eat or what you shall drink, nor about your body, what you shall put on... (Mt. 6:25-33). Saint Paul tells us to "have no anxiety about anything" (Phil. 4:6), and Saint Peter says to "cast all your anxieties on Him, for He cares about you" (1 Pt. 5:7).

The famous British convert, Father Faber (1814 -1863), wrote a spiritual conference entitled "Confidence, The Only Worship." By confidence, he means trust. Trusting God is the essence of the worship and honor that is due to God, and most of us greatly lack trust.

He writes, "There is something so monstrous in not trusting God, that we should have thought it must be a rare thing among good people. But experience teaches very differently. Many aim at perfection, and few attain it. In almost every case the reason of the failure is the want of confidence in God."

Usually, when we talk about trusting God, we think of benefitting ourselves. If we trust in God, we will have peace of mind; if we trust in God, we will be less anxious and stressed. All of this is true, but more importantly, it is through trust that we most effectively honor God and please Him. Through lack of trust, we offend and grieve Him.

In baptism, we committed our lives to Jesus Christ and now belong to Him. Since the day of our baptism, we are his property and possession. He will take care of us, so let us trust Him.

"Trust in Him at all times, O people; pour out your heart before Him; God is a refuge for us" (Ps. 62:8). **ECL**



## Carpathian Village Saint Nicholas Shrine

802 Snow Hill Road, Cresco, PA 18326-7810  
Tel (570) 595-3265 - Cell (570) 650-3252  
Email: [carpathianvillage@earthlink.net](mailto:carpathianvillage@earthlink.net)  
Father Michael J. Salmicky, Director

Carpathian Village is presently taking reservations for group retreats, ski weekends, family vacations, day of recollection weekends, parish or group picnics, and private retreats. To schedule your event or for more information call or email Father Michael.

### 2025 Summer Camp Dates

**July 6-10, 2025**

Camp Theodore Tyros—Teen Coed Camp, Ages 13-17

**July 13-17, 2025**

Camp Theotokos—Girls Camp, Ages 6-17

**July 20-24, 2025**

Altar Server Congress—Ages 6-17

**Aug 10-14, 2025**

Camp St Nicholas—Preteen Coed Camp, Ages 6-12



### Southern Summer Camp Survey!!!

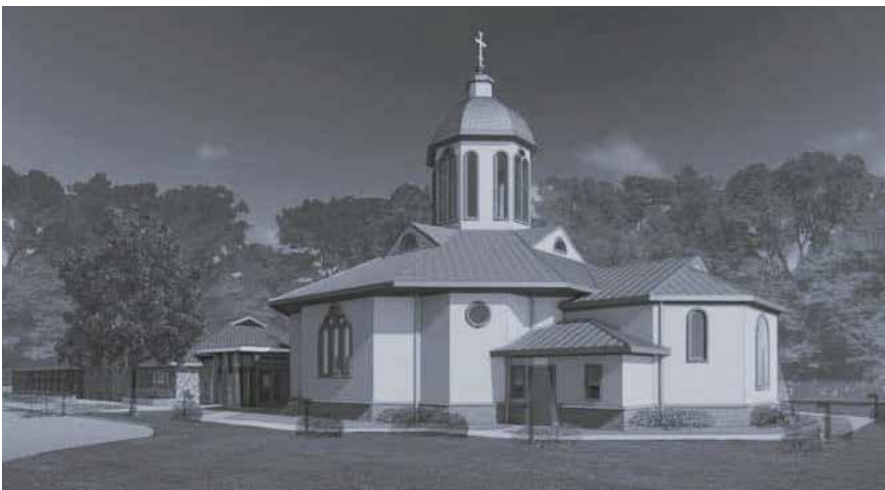
We value your input as we plan exciting new youth camps in the southeastern United States! To help us tailor these camps to best meet your family's needs, please take a moment to fill out our quick survey. You can access the survey by visiting the link provided or by scanning the QR code. Your feedback is essential in shaping an unforgettable experience for your children. Thank you for your time and support! Please complete prior to February 15th, 2025. <https://bit.ly/passaiccampsurvey>

You are invited and welcome to join us for  
**DIVINE LITURGY (MASS) VIGIL**  
**EVERY SATURDAY 11AM**  
(Fulfills Sunday Obligation)

Celebrated by Fr. Oleksiy Nebesnyk at  
**Christ Lutheran Church**  
**15699 SE 80th Ave.**  
**Summerfield, FL 34491**  
For more information call 352-326-9831



Follow us for updates & live-stream  
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New Building coming soon

### YOUR PARISH AT THE JERSEY SHORE

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Home of Eastern Catholic Radio  
1937 Church Road, Toms River, NJ

732-255-6272  
Sunday Divine Liturgy at 9AM  
OLPHTR.ORG

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Maureen French – ECL circulation editor

### UPCOMING EPARCHIAL AND PARISH EVENTS

#### Eastern Catholic Life

Circulation Department  
445 Lackawanna Avenue  
Woodland Park, NJ 07424

Next Issue:  
May, 2025

Copy Deadline:  
April, 25 2025

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.

#### APRIL, 2025

- 17 Holy Thursday  
*Chancery Closed*
- 18 Holy and Great Friday  
*Chancery Closed*
- 19 Holy Saturday
- 20 Pascha; the Great Day of the Resurrection of Our Lord, God, & Savior Jesus Christ
- 21 Bright Monday  
*Chancery Closed*
- 28 -5/01 Presbyteral Days

#### MAY, 2025

- 6 Annual Seminary of Saints Cyril & Methodius Lecture
- 14 Mid-Pentecost
- 26 Memorial Day  
*Chancery Closed*
- 29 Ascension of Our Lord: Holyday of Obligation

#### Visiting The Myrtle Beach Area This Winter?

Blessed Basil Hopko  
Byzantine Catholic  
Mission  
3059 SC Highway 90

Conway, SC  
All Liturgies will start at 10 AM.  
Follow us on Facebook for any schedule changes.

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:

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