



EASTERN CATHOLIC LIFE

Official Publication of the Byzantine Catholic Eparchy of Passaic

VOL. LII, NO. 7

JULY 2016

PRESBYTERAL DAYS 2016

Woodland Park, NJ



top: Mr. Jens Bargmann, Fathers Thomas Petro, Edward Semko, Jody Baran, Phillip Scott, Joseph Bertha, Peter Tomas, Richard Rohrer, John Cigan, Robert Wisniewski, James Carroll OFM, Edward Higgins, Michael Kerestes, Harry Untereiner, Mykhaylo Prodanets, James Badeaux, Mr. James Fraser, Father Edward Cimbala, second row: Fathers Peter Donish, Gregory Hosler, Salvatore Pignato, Michael Yurista, Ronald Barusefski, Vincent Brady, Conan Timoney, John Basarab, Leonard Martin SJ, Peter Hosak, Francis Rella, third row: Fathers Robert Evancho, Frank Hanin-cik, Alex Shuter, Nicholas DeProspero, Msgr. Robert Senetsky, Fathers Vasyl Chepelsky, Robert Hopodar, Vitaliy Pukhayev, G. Scott Boghossian, Martin Vavrak, James Spera, Charles Yastishock, fourth row: Gary Mensinger, Marcel Szabo, Michael Salnick, Michael Popson, John Custer, Mykahaylo Kravchuk, Iaroslav Korostil, Bishop Kurt, Fathers Tyler Strand, Lewis Rabayda, Ihor Vorontsov, Msgr. John Sekellick, Fathers Steven Galuschik, James Demko, Jerome Wolbert OFM, Gregory Noga, and Archpriest James Hayer.

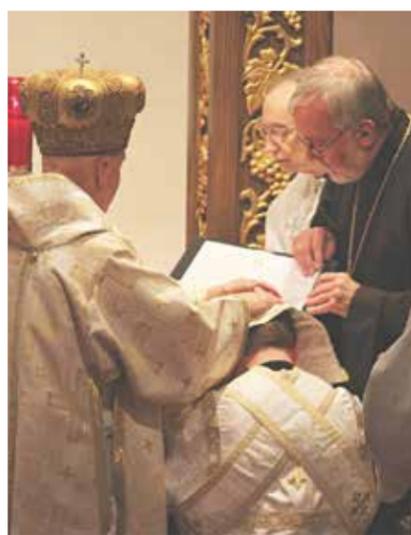
The priests of the Eparchy of Passaic once again locked up their churches and rectories and headed to the annual Eparchial Presbyteral Days from April 25th to April 28th, 2016, whose theme was "Ministry to the Elderly." Instead of making their way to the Poconos where the annual meeting had taken place for many years, or to Maryland, where it had been held for the past two years, they went to Woodland Park, NJ, to the parish hall of Saint Michael Cathedral Chapel, where Father Jack Custer is rector, located on the grounds of the Eparchial Center. This was fortuitous for two reasons: they were able to use eparchial meeting space, rather than renting conference rooms in a hotel, thus making better use of eparchial facilities; and they had access to the cathedral chapel, without having to celebrate Liturgy in a makeshift chapel in a conference room or having to travel by bus or car to a Byzantine Catholic Church for the Divine Liturgy and other services.

After arriving at and checking into the rooms reserved for them a few miles from the Eparchial Center, the priests drove to the cathedral chapel parish hall to begin their four-day series of meetings and information sessions. Having received the

Continued on page 8

THREE DEACONS ORDAINED

Deacon Edward Quinn in Pottstown, PA, and Deacons Michael Tisma and James Smith in Roswell, GA



Bishop Kurt ordains Subdeacon Edward Quinn to the Sacred Diaconate with Father Nicholas DeProspero (pastor) and Father Edward Higgins (master of ceremonies and local protopresbyter).

With gratitude to Almighty God, Subdeacon Edward Quinn was ordained to the Holy Order of Deacon on Sunday, May 1, 2016, by Bishop Kurt at Saint

Continued on page 9

The parish family of Epiphany of Our Lord Byzantine Church in Roswell, GA, had much to celebrate on Sunday, June 5, 2016. After almost 25 years since the last ordination at Epiphany, not just one, but two men, Subdeacons

Michael Tisma and James Smith, were elevated to the Holy Order of Deacon by Bishop Kurt.

Bishop Kurt officiated at the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy with concelebrants Father Philip Scott, pas-

Continued on page 9



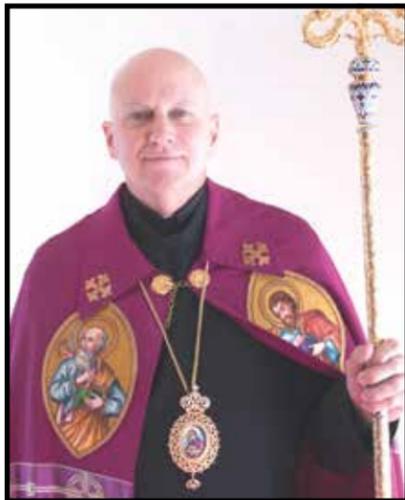
The newly-ordained Deacon James Smith, Bishop Kurt Burnette, and newly-ordained Deacon Michael Tisma.

Clergy appointments and obituary—p3

Schedules for summer pilgrimages—pp6, 12—13

Obituaries and Altar Server Congress registration information—p8

New book translated by eparchial priests—p15



I LIFT UP MY EYES...

Pastoral Reflections of Bishop Kurt



ON THIS ROCK

If you read the whole New Testament, there is one Person who stands out before all others, and that is Jesus without doubt. If you simply count the number of times that His name appears, it appears about 50 times more than the next most popular name, that is, about 10,000 times compared to 200. In fact, His name appears 200 times more often than His mother Mary. Nevertheless, as a man, Jesus did live in a community of people and some people in His life are more important than others. The one person who really stands out is Saint Peter. He is mentioned more often in the New Testament than anyone after Jesus, although Saint Paul runs neck and neck with Saint Peter. Since they both have other names (Simon and Saul) it's a little difficult to count carefully; I'll leave that up to you. In our Church, the importance of these two men, Peter and Paul, is emphasized because their feast day has one of the four fasts in our church. We have two great fasts, one before Easter and one before Christmas, and then two smaller fasts, one before the Dormition and one before the feast of Saints Peter and Paul.

I find Saint Peter one of the most interesting characters in the New Testament, and one of the easiest to relate to. Although he seems like a simple straightforward man, a man with no secrets who says what he is thinking, his friendship with Jesus takes a few twists and turns—usually because of his own mistakes which are out there for anyone to see. Peter is often contrasted with Judas Iscariot at the time of the Passion, but they are really a contrast before then, as well. Considering how important Judas is, we don't know anything about him. He is a secretive man, living in his own private manipulative world, planning to use Jesus for his own power, and then being destroyed when his attempts to control everything blow up in his face. Saint Peter denies his friend Jesus out of weakness, but Judas betrays Jesus deliberately for money. Saint Peter weeps bitterly for his mistake, but Judas cannot apologize because he never had any real friends, only business opportunities, and Judas was always his own savior.

The first part of this great friendship between Jesus and Peter begins with an impulsive act by Saint Peter, the kind of impulsive thing we see throughout his life. Jesus says, "Follow me, I will make you fishers of men," and Peter walks out on his livelihood to follow Jesus. In Saint Luke's Gospel, Jesus does work a miracle when He calls Peter, but again it is Peter who impulsively prostrates before Jesus and calls Him "Lord" and says "depart from me for I am a sinful man." Clearly Saint Peter has found his purpose in life, has seen a glimpse of the divine, and has decided to see where it leads him.

At the beginning, Jesus works a miracle in Peter's own family. Most men received their faith

from a woman, a mother or grandmother or wife, and probably Peter's mother-in-law encouraged him to stick with Jesus after she was cured by Him. It's easy to imagine the continuing sense of wonder and thrill that Peter must have experienced as he was an eyewitness to the many signs of Jesus, curing the blind and deaf and lame and mute, overpowering demonic forces and weather. In one of his impulsive acts, Peter even walks on water, defying the laws of nature trying to get to Jesus. As if things couldn't get any better, Peter even sees Jesus raise a corpse from the dead.

Many of us received our faith from childhood, but we all know someone who found Jesus as an adult. These people seem to experience things the same way Peter did, a continuing sense of wonder. They see one miracle after another and insist on talking about it. As Peter's trust and knowledge grow, this first phase in his conversion reaches a climax at Caesarea Philippi. Jesus takes His chief followers on a little retreat before the Transfiguration and the trip to Jerusalem. In the beautiful mountains north of Galilee surrounded by forest and natural springs, Jesus asks them "Who do men say that I am?" and then "Who do you say that I am?" Impulsive as ever, it is Saint Peter who blurts out, "You are the Christ! the Son of the Living God!" Up until now, Saint Peter has been experiencing a childlike conversion, watching Jesus work miracles and feeling like he was helping out in the whole thing. Now you might say that he has an intellectual conversion. Saint Peter now has intellectual knowledge of who Jesus really is. This intellectual conversion is quickly followed by another overpowering experience, the Transfiguration. Even in this overpowering experience, it is Saint Peter in the group who opens up his mouth and says the first thing that comes into his head. Then God the Father speaks up and confirms by Supernatural Revelation what Saint Peter had formulated in his mind: Jesus really is Divine; He really is the Son of God. Peter's charming exuberance is portrayed in our traditional icons. When you see three figures cowering before the Transfiguration, it is Peter who has his head up to see what's going on while James and John keep their faces down.

Right after this climax in Saint Peter's journey, he begins to find out that following Jesus isn't what he thought it would be. You might say that Peter enters into phase two of his conversion. Jesus begins to teach the disciples that He, Jesus, must be handed over to the Gentiles who will mock Him, spit on Him, beat Him, and kill Him, but then He will rise from the dead. Peter immediately tries to take control of the situation. Although Peter is like Judas when he tries to take control, he does the right thing by taking his complaint to Jesus instead of working in secret as Judas. Because Peter takes his complaint to Jesus, Jesus immediately corrects him, and in a public and humiliating manner. Perhaps you have had the experience of being corrected by God quickly and painfully after a mistake—what a blessing that is. When we see people who continue farther and farther into evil, we realize what a blessing it is when we accept correction from God, even when it is painful and humiliating.

As they journey to Jerusalem, Peter and the other disciples continue in their plan for an earthly kingdom and fight with each other for position and rank. Despite Jesus' attempts to teach them otherwise, Peter tries to assert himself even at the Last Supper: when Jesus reveals the horrifying news that one of His closest friends will betray Him, Peter brags and says, "I will never deny You!" Jesus warns him, "Before the cock crows twice, you will deny me thrice." I think that there is a tradition in many places that before a large sin, God often sends a warning, just as He did with Cain. Although we can see here that Peter is still trying to take control of Jesus' plan, you might say he is even trying to be his own savior, I think we can't help liking Peter's impetuous outburst of affection, even if we know he can't follow through. There's something about his openness in his love for Jesus that wins our hearts, and perhaps also the heart of Jesus.

In the days after the Last Supper, Peter goes through a terrible ordeal that finishes his conversion, much like a soft clay pot is put into an extremely hot furnace to be fired. Or, as the scriptures say, gold and silver are purified by extreme heat. As Peter not only denies knowledge of Jesus, even swearing a false oath, he then sees his Lord led off to His painful execution. The scriptures say that he went out and wept bitterly. According to tradition, Peter wept so much for the rest of his life, perhaps everytime he told this story to people in church, he had furrows in his face from crying. The Tears of Saint Peter have been the inspiration for much art, including paintings by El Greco and others, and the last musical masterpiece of Orlando di Lasso completed weeks before his death.

Imagine what Saint Peter must have felt—his last interaction with Christ was the look that Jesus gave him as He was led off to His execution. Peter must have thought that was the end. I have known many people who talk about the last words they had with a loved one. In some cases they had a beautiful last meeting. In other cases, they exchanged insults or harsh words or were simply cold and spent the rest of their lives wishing they could undo it. How much better we would all treat each other if we thought that each parting might be our last one.

Well God always brings a happy ending, if we cooperate just a little with Him. In Peter's case Jesus forgave him because Peter repented. Judas on the other hand was too proud to weep. His horror was not for the pain he caused to Jesus and His friends, but he was horrified at himself for making a mistake. Even though he realized he was wrong, he was wrapped up in himself to the end, destroyed by his own pride.

For Saint Peter, he is now entering into the next phase of his friendship with Jesus. Jesus told him at Caesarea Philippi that He would build His church on the rock. Now Peter has to take his new found humility and trust in Jesus and be the rock of the new Church. When Jesus leaves them at the Ascension and sends His Holy Spirit, Peter must make his way the world, untrained in public speaking or organizational management, but

always trusting that Jesus will not abandon him. When a lame beggar asks for help, he says, "Gold and silver I have none, but what I have I give to you, in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise and walk." The beggar stands and walks and even leaps around the temple area to the amazement of everyone. When Saint Peter speaks to the astonished crowd, he doesn't take any credit for the miracle. He doesn't say, "Haven't you heard? I'm the rock. I'm the first pope." He says, "Men of Israel, why do you wonder at this, or why do you stare at us, as though by our own power or piety we had made him walk? The God of Abraham and of Isaac and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, glorified His servant Jesus..." And when interrogated by the authorities the next day he says, "by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead, by Him this man is standing before you well." Notice how careful Saint Peter is to give credit to God, and never himself. Although Saint Peter is still the simple man he was before, a man who

speaks and acts on what is in his heart and never overthinks things, now he relies always on God and gives credit to God and never tries to take over from God.

I think the life of Saint Peter is really a roadmap of the Christian life. We see his first meeting with Jesus, he goes along with the call of Jesus to see what happens. Then when he starts to see Jesus working wonders, he is an enthusiastic dedicated Christian. The second phase begins when Saint Peter painfully learns that the Christian life involves hardship. He is abruptly corrected by the Son of God Himself, and then sees how the world at large will mistreat the Messiah Himself and then all of His followers. Even after the Resurrection, Jesus still carries the wounds of His execution on His glorified body. Archbishop Fulton Sheen preached a famous sermon saying some people want a church with no wounds on it, but even the glorified body of Jesus carried wounds. After being refined in this fire, Saint Peter enters

the third phase after the Resurrection and the Descent of the Holy Spirit. Now he accepts the office God has given him, and he relies completely on God and gives all the glory to God. How different the history of the Church would have been if every Christian and especially every Christian leader had imitated Peter's friendship with Jesus!

Here are some words from Saint Peter to conclude: "Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal which comes upon you to prove you, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice in so far as you share Christ's suffering, that you may also rejoice and be glad when His glory is revealed. ... Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that in due time He may exalt you. Cast all your anxieties on Him, for He cares about you."

+Kurt Bunette



FROM THE OFFICE OF THE BISHOP CLERGY APPOINTMENTS

Very Rev. Edward Higgins is relieved as administrator of Our Lady of Perpetual Help in Levittown, PA.

Rev. Myron Badnerosky continues in residence at Levittown, PA.
Bishop Kurt and our entire Church thank Father Myron Badnerosky for 60 years of exemplary service!

Rev. Edward Cimbala is relieved of Pastor of Saint Mary in Hillsborough, NJ, and is appointed as Pastor of Our Lady of Perpetual Help in Levittown, PA.

Rev. James Badeaux is relieved as Pastor of Saint Michael the Archangel in Mont Clare, PA, and as Administrator of Blessed Virgin Mary in Coatesville, PA, and is appointed Pastor of Saint Mary in Hillsborough, NJ.

Rev. John Cigan is relieved as temporary administrator of Saint Mary in Wilkes-Barre, PA, and is appointed Pastor of Saint Michael the Archangel in Mont Clare, PA, and Administrator of Blessed Virgin Mary in Coatesville, PA.

Rev. Michael Kerestes is relieved as Pastor of Saint Gregory of Nyssa in Beltsville, MD, and appointed as Pastor of Saint Mary in Wilkes-Barre, PA.

Rev. Lewis Rabayda is relieved as Parochial Vicar for the parishes of Saint John the Baptist in Lansford, PA, and Saint Mary in Nesquehoning, PA, and is appointed as Parochial Vicar for Saint Gregory of Nyssa in Beltsville, MD.

Rev. Conan Timoney is appointed Administrator of Saint Gregory of Nyssa in Beltsville, MD.

All appointments effective July 27, 2016.

Erratum: Rev. Mykhaylo Kravchuk was appointed Parochial Vicar for Saint Mary in Kingston, PA. (misreported in May's issue)

RETIRED PRIEST REPOSES IN THE LORD

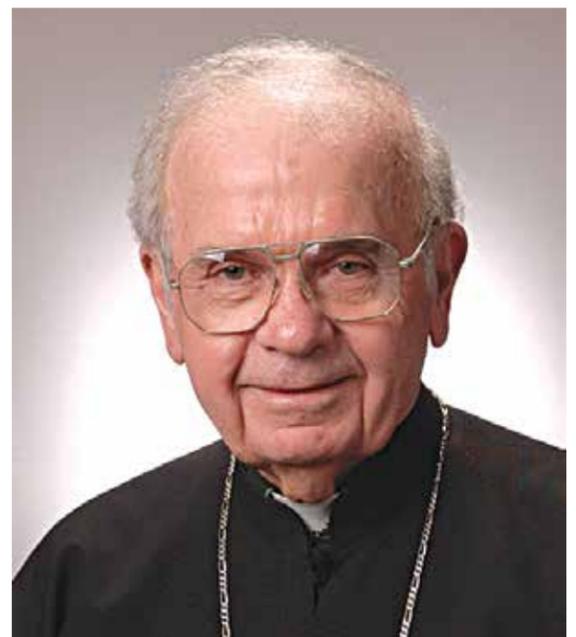
Father + Anselm Orlosky courtesy *Byzantine Catholic World (BCW)*

Father Anselm Orlosky, 88, fell asleep in the Lord Tuesday May 17, 2016, at the Chicon (Pa.) Medical Center. The sixth of six children, Father Anselm (né Andrew) was born Oct. 13, 1927, in Nesquehoning, PA, a son of the late George and Anna Orlosky.

After high school, he entered Saint Procopius College and the Benedictine Monastery in Lisle, IL, where he received a B.A. degree. Father Anselm professed his monastic vows on June 16, 1947. After his third year, he was sent to the Byzantine Catholic Seminary in Pittsburgh where he was ordained a priest on February 2, 1953 by Bishop Daniel Ivancho. Father Anselm was one of 14 monks from Saint Procopius Abbey in Lisle, IL, and the last surviving member of the founding Fathers of Holy Trinity Monastery (Byzantine Benedictines). He was elected Hegumen of the Butler, PA, monastery on Oct. 4, 1984.

In addition to his parents, Father Anselm is predeceased by brothers, George and John, and sisters, Mary Nalesnik and Helen Pietruch. Surviving are his sister, Irene Hubal of New Jersey; nephew Andrew Hubal and niece Carol Barber of New Jersey; nephews William (Joann) Nalesnik, Eugene Nalesnik, George Nalesnik, of Pennsylvania, and niece, Yvonne Nalesnik, of Louisiana; nephews,] John Pietruch, Francis Pietruch, Gregory Pietruch of Pennsylvania, and niece Anna Davis of Maryland.

Father Anselm's earthly remains lay in state Monday, May 23, and Tuesday, May 24, at Saint John the Baptist Byzantine Catholic Church in Lyndora, PA, where the Funeral Service for a Priest was celebrated both evenings. The Funeral Divine Liturgy was celebrated Wednesday morning, May 25, with Metropolitan Archbishop William Skurla presiding. Interment followed at



Mount Saint Macrina Cemetery in Uniontown, PA.

In blessed repose, grant, O Lord, eternal rest to your servant, the Priest Anselm. May his memory be eternal!



PEOPLE YOU KNOW

IN HARRISBURG

Honoring Our Veterans



Father Michael Popson and parishioner raise the flag

On Sunday, May 29, 2016, Father Michael Popson and the parishioners of Saint Ann Church gathered at the church entrance sign and flag display to commemorate Memorial Day. Each year a deceased veteran from the church has been honored by having his burial flag flown. Father Michael and members of the families helped retire last year's flag that had been flown in memory of George Wasdovich and raised this year's flag donated in memory of Michael Peda.

In 2012, Father Michael asked parishioners if they would graciously donate the veteran's flag they received at the funeral of their loved one. Since that year, flags have been donated from the families of Joseph Tenetylo, Peter Unuscavage, George Wasdovich, and Michael Peda.

As a parish family, we are forever grateful for our veterans' service to our country, and we honor their memory and faithful support to our church. Father Michael Popson is the pastor of Saint Ann Byzantine Catholic Church in Harrisburg, PA.

IN KINGSTON AND WILKES-BARRE TOWNSHIP

During the Lenten season of 2016, a special "mirovaniye" collection was made at both Saint Mary Byzantine Catholic Church in Kingston, PA, and Saint John the Baptist Byzantine Catholic Church in Wilkes-Barre Township, PA. The collection was made in spirit of fasting: "to share your bread with the hungry" (Isaiah 58.7). The two checks of \$1,800 from Saint Mary Parish and \$900 from Saint John Parish were donated to

Saint Vincent DePaul Kitchen in Wilkes-Barre.

Father Mykhaylo Prodanets, pastor of both parishes, stated: "The free will offering highlights our parishioners care for the needy during this Year of Mercy proclaimed by Pope Francis. Each Sunday of the Great Lent they expressed their monetary care prior to receiving special "mirovaniye" (anointing) after the Divine Liturgy."



Saint Mary Church Council President William Zdancewicz, Michael Cianciotta and Father Mykhaylo Prodanets



Richard Wodarczyk, Lay Signatory of Saint John Church, Michael Cianciotta, and Father Mykhaylo Prodanets

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St. Elias Day

A PARISH FAMILY REUNION CELEBRATION
ALL ARE WELCOME!

THE 23RD OF JULY 2016

4:00PM DIVINE LITURGY

5:00 - 8:00PM
DINNER/RAFFLES

ST. ELIAS PARISH

42 COOKE AVENUE
CARTERET, NJ 07008

"O Glorious Elias, Prophet of great wonders. You were taken alive up into heaven, and to You was given thunder."

ST. ELIAS BYZANTINE CATHOLIC CHURCH
REV. JOHN CUSTER, ADMINISTRATOR
REV. EDWARD SEMKO, SPIRITUAL AND PASTORAL CARE
WWW.SAINTELIASSTODAY.COM

AROUND THE EPARCHY



IN FORT PIERCE



IN ANNANDALE

Family Weekend

Early June has grown into an informal "family weekend" at Epiphany of Our Lord parish in Annandale, Virginia. The weekend starts on ...

Thursday, with the Epiphany Men's Club 14th Annual Father-Son Steak Night, this year featuring the Eparchy of Passaic's newest priest, Father Lewis Rabayda, as guest speaker.

Friday features the annual "Family Camp Out," with overnight tents on the parish grounds and starting with the burning of old and unused pussy willows and palms from the Pascha season.

Saturday, Epiphany parishioners in Grade Two have their "very special day" when they receive the Mystery of Repentance for the first time.

Sunday caps the day off with an annual trip to Nationals Ballpark. Even better (from Epiphany's perspective): Washington beat Philadelphia by a score of 5-4!



A gift to Rt. Rev. Archimandrite Glen Polthier, for his dedicated service to our parish

Mike and Tillie Hatalovsky's 70th anniversary



Pentecost Sunday



Men at the family camp out burn old and used blessed items including palms, old Bibles, and old vestments.



Parishioners enjoy the Nationals game

VISITING MYRTLE BEACH THIS SUMMER?

Blessed Basil Hopko Byzantine Catholic Mission welcomes you!

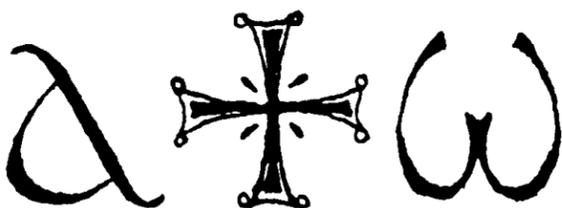
THE DIVINE LITURGY

WILL BE CELEBRATED ON THE FOLLOWING SUNDAYS AT 10 A.M.:

JULY 3, 10, 24, 31 AUGUST 7, 14, 21

For more information call Jack and Cathy Securda at 910-575-2265 or Don and Jean Wirth at 843-249-9502 or Father Conan Timoney 410-302-6996.

The Blessed Basil Hopko Mission is located at 3059 Highway 90, Conway, Myrtle Beach, SC
It is located between Routes 22 and 501 on Highway 90.



11 DAY PILGRIMAGE TO ITALY & AMALFI
OCTOBER 31 - NOVEMBER 10, 2016

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REV. FR. EDWARD CICALA
REV. FR. JAMES SPERA

\$2999 per person from New York
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TOUR PRICE INCLUDES: Roundtrip Air from New York, First Class/Select Seats, Most Meals, Services of a professional Tour Director, Comprehensive Sightseeing, All hotel service charges, portage & entrance fees.

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- Family Friendly
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- East European Gift Shop
- Basket Raffle
- Bingo

ENTERTAINMENT
Polka Whooooo 1 - 4:30 pm
Polka Quads 5 - 9 pm
• KIDS GAMES 1 - 7 pm •

FREE PARKING & ADMISSION
For a comfortable seat, bring your own chair • NO Carry-on foods, drinks or personal picnic tables



In this Byzantine Catholic World (BCW) file photo, Bishop John imparts his blessing upon a youthful pilgrim following the Children's Procession during the 2013 Pilgrimage to Our Lady of Perpetual Help in Uniontown. Bishop Gerald also is pictured on the right.

NEWLY APPOINTED HEAD OF PHOENIX EPARCHY TO BEGIN HIS TENURE JULY 20
Bishop John Pazak, CSsR, enthronement date set *courtesy BCW*

Bishop John S. Pazak, CSsR, who on May 7 was named by Pope Francis as the new bishop of the Byzantine Catholic Eparchy of the Holy Protection of Mary in Phoenix, Ariz., will assume his duties as head of the eparchy when he is enthroned at Saint Stephen Byzantine Catholic Cathedral on July 20.

A member of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer (the Redemptorists), Bishop John was ordained to the presbyterate in 1972, and began his episcopal career in December, 2000, when he became Bishop of the Eparchy of Toronto, Ontario Canada for Byzantine (Greek Catholic) Slovaks.

Bishop John succeeds retiring Bishop Gerald N. Dino, who had led the Eparchy of Phoenix since his 2008 enthronement.

Pilgrimage for Peace

Sunday August 7, 2016

celebrating the 800th anniversary of the Portiuncula Pardon during this Holy Year of Mercy



Portiuncula Chapel, now contained in the Basilica of Our Lady of the Angels, outside of Assisi.

The Portiuncula is a "little portion" of land with a small chapel dedicated to Our Lady of the Angels. Here the early friars met each year, and Francis embraced Sister Death.

St Francis of Assisi asked that those who come to the Portiuncula would receive an indulgence – a pardon of their sin (as usual, with Confession, Holy Communion, and prayers for the Pope). This year we celebrate the 800th anniversary of this pardon, in our day extended to all Franciscan churches.

August 7 Schedule

- 10am Matins
- 11am-1pm Food Service
- noon Holy Anointing
- 1pm Divine Liturgy
- 2:30-5pm Food Service
- 3:30-4:30pm Children's Program
- 4-4:30pm Spiritual Talk
by Fr Edward Tlucek, OFM, vicar provincial of Assumption BVM Province, which includes Holy Dormition Friary. Fr Ed has assisted at Byzantine parishes for several years, and he is a native of Wilkes-Barre.
- 5pm Vespers

Confession/Penance will be available visit us online: <https://byzfranciscan.org/>

Portiuncula photo credit: By zyance (Own work) [CC BY-SA 2.5 (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/2.5>)], via Wikimedia Commons

held at

Holy Dormition Friary
712 State Hwy 93
Sybertsville, PA 18251

for more information:

570-788-1212 ext 400
holydormition@gmail.com

"Light of the East-2" Pilgrimage
 (Optional OL EuroEast IV Conference Plenary Sessions)
October 17-28, 2016
Rome and Constantinople
 (Optional Weekend to Cappadocia)
"Creation: Our Shared Inheritance"
 Sponsored by the Orientale Lumen Foundation and Viking Travel

Highlights

- Hear from Church leaders about the ecumenical dimensions of creation and theological issues
- Learn about the Papal Encyclical *Laudato Si'* (On Care for Our Common Home) from those responsible for its content
- Learn about the 20+ years of environmental symposia sponsored by the Ecumenical Patriarchate around the world
- Visit the four Holy Doors at the Basilicas of Rome for the Jubilee Year of Mercy

Visit **major religious sites** in Rome and Constantinople (Istanbul), including:

- St Peter's Basilica
- Sistine Chapel & Vatican Museum
- Basilicas of St John Lateran, St Mary Major and St Paul Outside the Walls
- Ukrainian Catholic Cathedral
- Hagia Sophia
- Christ the Savior in Chora
- Church of Christ Pantocrator
- Patriarchal Cathedral of St George
- Monastery and Seminary on Halki



"Light of the East" Pilgrimage Private Audience with Pope Francis in 2014

Explore **historical sites** of the Roman and Byzantine empires, including:

- The Forum
- The Colosseum
- The Pantheon
- The Hippodrome
- The Blue Mosque
- The Grand Boazaar
- Cruise on the Bosphorus



"Light of the East" Pilgrimage Private Audience with Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew in 2014

Attend religious prayer services throughout the tour.

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For more information visit www.VikingTvl.com or call 630-321-1669

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

from the Office of the Metropolitan

Join Metropolitan William Skurla and Bishop Kurt Burnette on

A PILGRIMAGE FOR THE HOLY YEAR OF MERCY

October 19 thru 30, 2016

12 days, 10 nights

ROME ✠ BARI ✠ ASSISI ✠ VENICE

For complete itinerary, pricing, or further information contact **Diane Rabiej**

Executive Assistant to the Bishop, Eparchy of Passaic

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Specially organized for the Byzantine Catholic Metropolitan Church of Pittsburgh USA by the Vatican Office of Pilgrimages



FATHER OF NEWLY-ORDAINED PRIEST REPOSES IN THE LORD

+Daniel Rabayda

Daniel Rabayda, 91, of Summit Hill, PA, entered into eternal rest in his home on Wednesday, May 25, 2016. He was the husband of Patricia (Yannone) Rabayda. They would have celebrated their 40th Wedding Anniversary on June 12, 2016. Prior, he was married to the late Suzanna (Wargo) Rabayda, who passed away in 1970. Born in Summit Hill, PA, he was the son of the late Michael and Justine Esther (Stockmal) Rabayda. A 1942 graduate of Summit Hill High School, he served with the 76th Infantry, U.S. Army in the European Theater of Operations during World

War II. He served in the front line with the 417th Infantry Regiment as it stormed through the Rhineland, Ardennes and Central Europe, earning the Distinguished Unit Badge, American Service Medal and the European Theater Service Medal with three Bronze Stars. When he returned home, he helped his family operate a tavern, restaurant and grocery store on Hazard Street in Summit Hill. He then worked as a butcher at the Diamond Supermarket of Coaldale, PA. Afterward, he was employed by the Bethlehem Steel Company for 7 years working on the railroad. He then worked for 15 years at Mack Trucks, Allentown, retiring from Mack in 1987. He was a member of the American Legion Post 316, Summit Hill, the Panther Valley Golden Agers, its choir, the Lansford AMVETS Post, the Summit Dart League, and the Board of Directors of the Carbon Schuylkill Industrial Development Corpora-

tion. As a lifelong parishioner of Saint John the Baptist Byzantine Catholic Church, Lansford, PA, he belonged to its choir and served as its cantor for 16 years. In 2015, Dan served as Grand Marshall of the Summit Hill Memorial Day Parade. Proudly claiming to have been "the best trumpeter in Summit Hill High School," Danny learned the instrument from Thomas F. Dorsey Sr., father of the famous Dorsey Brothers (Tommy and Jimmy).

Surviving in addition to his widow are his sons, Daniel J. of New York City; Allen and his wife, Christine, of VA, and their children, Daniel, Adam and Sarah; Phillip and his wife, Vanessa, of Coaldale, PA, and their daughter, Angelina; and Father Lewis Rabayda of Nesquehoning, PA. Dan's surviving siblings are Michael Rabayda and Florence (Rabayda) Osilka. He was also preceded in death by John Bowen, George Bowen, Margaret (Bowen) Boyle,



Anna Bowen, Helen Rabayda, Paul Rabayda and Basil Rabayda.

Office of Christian Burial with Divine Liturgy was on Tuesday, May 31, 2016, at 10 a.m. at Saint John Byzantine Catholic Church, Lansford, PA. Bishop Kurt Burnette presided with Father Lewis M. Rabayda as main celebrant, and the following priests as concelebrants: Msgr. John Sekellick, Father John Zeyack, Father Leonard Martin SJ, Father Ron Hatton, Father Gregory Hossler, and Father Jaroslav Korostil. Military Interment followed at Saint John Byzantine Cemetery in Summit Hill, PA.

FUNERAL OF +FATHER ROBERT J. SKURLA

Trenton, NJ

On January 23, 1927, +Andrew and +Anna Skurla brought their infant son, Robert James, to Saint Mary Greek Catholic Church in Trenton, NJ, to be enrolled in the Body of Christ through the Holy Mysteries of Baptism and Chrismation by the hand of Father Eugene Homicsko.

On May 23, 2016, the body of the priest +Robert J. Skurla was returned to the Church of his baptism

for the Office of Christian Burial, thus ending a life of service in the Vineyard of Christ under the protection of the Most Holy Theotokos whom Father Robert so dearly loved. That evening Father James G. Hayer, Protosyncellus, celebrated the Office of Burial of a Priest with several eparchial priests concelebrating.

On Tuesday, May 24, His Grace Bishop Kurt celebrated the Hier-

archical Divine Liturgy for the repose of the immortal soul of Father Robert. Concelebrating with the bishop were Father Gregory Noga, pastor; Fathers Robert J. Hospodar, Myron Badnerosky and Michael Yurista. Just as water was poured upon the head of Father Robert at his baptism, the Oil of Gladness was poured upon his head by Bishop Kurt in the final act of the funeral service, thus calling to mind the priests' participation in the High Priesthood of Jesus Christ through Whom all priestly authority flows.

In a touching move, Bishop Kurt asked Father Myron Badnerosky to bless his classmate of sixty years and those gathered for his funeral. The final blessing was then given by the bishop celebrant followed by the sprinkling of the body of the de-



Bishop Kurt pours oil over +Father Robert's head

ceased by the celebrants and priests in attendance. The mortal remains of the Priest +Robert were then taken to the parish cemetery for interment in the Dormition Section of the cemetery in the family plot.



LET YOUR SOUL REJOICE IN THE LORD 2016 ALTAR SERVER CONGRESS

JULY 17TH – JULY 20TH 2016

AGES 6-17

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Have fun while learning more about your important role as an Altar Server! This Event is underwritten by the Eparchy

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For questions and details contact Deacon Stephen

Russo: DcnStephen@gmail.com



PRESBYTERAL DAYS 2016

Continued from Page 1



information packets and schedule of events, they were welcomed by Father Gregory Noga, the overall coordinator for this annual event and by Father Jack Custer, rector, who went over general housekeeping items. Then, the priests enjoyed a delicious supper prepared and served by the parishioners of Saint Michael Cathedral. After supper, Bishop Kurt convened a Presbyteral Council meeting in the chapel itself. Following a model begun in the Eparchy of Passaic by Metropolitan William when he was the bishop here, it was an “open” meeting. That means that all priests of the eparchy could attend and listen to the proceedings, but only the elected and ex officio (by virtue of the office) members of the Presbyteral Council could vote. During the course of this meeting, Bishop Kurt introduced two married men, former Protestant ministers, who have been accepted to study for the priesthood for the eparchy. The bishop informed the assembled clergy that

he had formed a new office in the Eparchy to deal with men who are married former Protestant ministers who wish to become priests, since their formation needs would be different from other seminarians. He revealed that he had appointed Father Edward Cimbala, to head up that office. He also lauded and thanked Father Robert Hospodar, Chancellor emeritus of the eparchy, as the term of his position as chancellor was coming to an end. Bishop Kurt awarded him a jeweled pectoral cross in recognition of his thirty-four years of service in the chancery office, of which twenty were spent serving as Eparchial Chancellor. Once Father Robert had been given a round of applause by the assembled clergy, Bishop Kurt announced that Deacon Nicholas Daddona had been appointed to serve as Father Robert’s successor as Chancellor of the Eparchy.

Over the ensuing days, the priests listened attentively to presenta-

tions about changes in health and property insurance and financial reporting. Reports from the various offices of the Eparchy were given, such as Father Sal Pignato on vocations; Father James Badeaux on the Eastern Catholic Life; Msgr. John Sekellick on annulments; Father Scott Boghossian on pro-life issues; and Father Gary Mensinger about the Inter-eparchial Youth Rally. Father Francis Rella presented a documentary film he produced about ministry to the elderly, in continuity with the theme of the conference, in which Bishop Kurt, various members of the clergy and laity spoke about their experiences in this particular ministry, especially in dealing with issues of grief and dying. Then, Father Gary Mensinger joined Father Michael Salnicki in having the assembled priests play a card game called “Go Wish,” which can be played as solitaire or with a group, in which you are asked to select what are the most important things to you as you face end-of-life

decisions. The game helps you to know yourself and your own wishes better so you can communicate them to your family and your health care providers. They encouraged the clergy to use this game in helping their parishioners who are facing end-of-life decisions.

Presbyteral Days 2016 provided the priests not only with information to enhance their ministry, but also with time to renew friendships and acquaintances. The priests were also treated to a lunchtime cruise around the island of Manhattan, with great views of the skyline of New York City, the Statue of Liberty, and the Brooklyn Bridge. On their free afternoon and evening, many priests shared fraternity by going out to supper in groups.

May God continue to guide the hearts and hands of our presbyters as they zealously attend to the spiritual needs of our Byzantine Catholic faithful from New England to Florida! **ECL**



DEACONS MICHAEL TISMA AND JAMES SMITH IN ROSWELL, GA

Continued from Page 1 written by Carol Evancko and photos by Mia McCorkle

tor of Epiphany of our Lord; Father Edward Cimbala, pastor of Saint Mary in Hillsborough, NJ; Father Robert Stash of Saint John Chrysostom in Columbus, OH (Eparchy of Parma); and Deacons Eugene Senderak of Saint Nicholas in Barberton, OH (Eparchy of Parma) and Edward Quinn of Saint John the Baptist in Pottstown, PA. Father Steven Galuschik of All Saints in North Fort Myers, FL, served as Master of Ceremonies. Father Edward Cimbala, outgoing Director of Deacon Formation, presented the candidates to Bishop Kurt for ordination. This was special since they are the last two deacons to be ordained during his tenure as Director of Deacon Formation. Deacons Eugene and Edward were classmates of Michael and James in the Deacon Formation Program at Saints Cyril and Methodius Byzantine Catholic Seminary and traveled to Atlanta to celebrate the occasion and to serve as First and Second Deacon at the Divine Liturgy.

Msgr. Robert Sell of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Lafayette, IN, and Deacons Tom Gotschall of Saint Andrew Roman Catholic Church in Roswell, GA, and Gerry Kazin of Saint Benedict Roman Catholic Church in Duluth, GA, friends of the ordinandi, were also in attendance. Family and friends travelled from Texas, Ohio, Massachusetts, Florida, New York, North Carolina and Tennessee, to witness the diaconal ordination and to celebrate this momentous occasion. Following the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy and Ordination, there was a luncheon in honor of the new deacons at a local restaurant.

Deacon Michael was born in Uniontown, PA, and later attended high school and college in Cleveland, OH, before moving to Atlanta

with his family. Michael traces his desire to serve God's people back to the days when his "baba" would take him as a youngster to help her work at Mount Saint Macrina; he also remembers the many priests and sisters who educated, encouraged and inspired him throughout his life to answer God's calling to a religious vocation. After graduating from college, his 45 year business career included positions as financial controller for major hotels in Atlanta, North Carolina and Florida, general manager and finance director for an international tour operator, and world-wide marketing, event planning, and European tour operations. He currently is employed by a large Atlanta firm as Senior Manager overseeing 15 managers. His responsibilities include financial and fiscal management, budget preparation and analysis, as well as property and asset management. He has been an active member of his parish for 30 years where he served as cantor



Msgr. Robert Sell, Betty Smith, Eric Smith, Deacon James Smith, Tony and Diem Smith

and choir director, adult education instructor, altar server, and ministry to the sick.

Throughout these many years, Michael continued to experience a restless heart. He felt there was something missing in his life. He answered God's call and entered the Deacon Formation Program in 2011. It was on the Third Sunday after Pentecost, with the imposition of Bishop Kurt's hands, that he committed himself completely to God's service.

When asked to reflect on his ordination, Deacon Michael recounted the deep emotion which came over him as Bishop Kurt placed his omophorion on Michael's head: "As I knelt at the Holy Table at which our Lord was present, Bishop Kurt prayed 'Divine Grace, which always heals what is infirm and supplies what is lacking, ordains the pious Subdeacon Michael to be a Deacon.' At that moment I felt deeply connected with my Bishop and the entire Church as this incredible surge, which could only have been the Holy Spirit, came over me. I became overwhelmed with tears and realized in my heart what our Lord was telling me all these years. In order to be His Deacon, I must courageously follow and choose the same path as Jesus Christ and submit myself completely to Him so that He can transform me into the person He wants me to become in order to fulfill the purpose which He has in mind. That restless heart which I experienced my entire life finally found peace." Deacon Michael now looks forward to serving his parish and the Eparchy in whatever capacity to which he is called.

Deacon James was born in Cleveland, OH, and is a veteran of the U.S. Air Force. James received a B.S. in geology from Cleveland State University and was a PhD. candidate at the University of Georgia in mineralogy. In addition to his experience

in private industry followed by 20 years at the U.S. Geological Survey, he taught geology, astronomy and transmission electron microscopy courses at Perimeter College, Georgia Tech Research Institute and The Art Institute. He is semi-retired, working part-time as an assessor of laboratories for the U.S. Department of Commerce. Deacon James served his parish as adult education instructor, trainer for altar servers, and sick call ministry.

Deacon James felt the call in his heart to the Lord to pursue the Diaconate in 2004. "My experiences at the Seminary, with my family and the parishioners at Epiphany as I pursued the Diaconate have drawn me closer to God in a way I have never felt before. I encourage all men and women to bring at least part of their life into a religious commitment. The reward of growing closer to Christ will outweigh the effort."

Both deacons completed their studies in the Diaconate Program at Saints Cyril and Methodius Byzantine Catholic Seminary in Pittsburgh. May God grant peace, health and happiness to the newly ordained Deacons Michael and James.



Niece, Carrie; Deacon Michael Tisma; mother, Rose; and his brother, Stephen

DEACON EDWARD QUINN ORDAINED IN POTTSTOWN, PA

Continued from Page 1

John the Baptist Church in Pottstown, PA. Assisting Bishop Kurt in the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy were Father Nicholas deProspero, the pastor of Saint John the Baptist Church; Father Edward Higgins, Pastor of Holy Ghost Church in Philadelphia, local protopresbyter, who served as Master of Ceremonies; Deacon Nicholas Daddona, from Saint Andrew Byzantine Catholic Church in Westbury, NY, who serves as Chancellor for the Eparchy and Director of Deacon Formation; Deacon Michael Senoyuit of Saint John the Baptist Parish; and Deacon Robert J. Behrens from Holy Ghost Church in Jessup, PA. Dur-

ing the Divine Liturgy, Bishop Kurt gave an extremely reflective homily concerning the Scripture readings regarding the Man Born Blind.

After a period of discernment, the newly-ordained Deacon began his four years of formal studies in June of 2011 at Saints Cyril and Methodius Byzantine Catholic Seminary in Pittsburgh, PA. He had earlier obtained his Master's Degree in Theology and Ministry from LaSalle University, Philadelphia, PA, and has a Master's Degree from Rutgers Graduate School of Business, and his Bachelor's Degree from the University of Scranton. Deacon Ed and



his wife, Mary, live in East Norriton, PA, and have two children and one grandchild.

A reception in the Church Hall followed immediately after the Divine Liturgy and Ordination.



FAITH AND COMMUNITY ISSUES

By Father Carmen Scuderi, OFM, Ed.D., P.C.C.

PASTORAL APPROACH TO HOMOSEXUALITY

What is meant by “disordered” in Church teaching in sexuality?

The document speaks of the homosexual inclination as objectively disordered but it defines objectively disordered as “an inclination that predisposes one toward what is truly not good for the human person” (p.5). The document is quick to admit that this understanding is not exclusive but rather inclusive to any activity that is not ordered to the ultimate purpose or good of the human person in any category. In the area of sexuality what is not directed toward the ultimate benefit of love and marriage is disordered; it goes against the Creative Plan of God.

The document makes a distinction in the concepts of disorder in that there is a disorder that goes against the nature of a thing as opposed to a disorder that is accidental, which goes against reason and the correction in reasoning which would lead to an increase in virtue. This distinction is made to emphasize the “crucially important” distinction that because an individual has an inclination that by nature is disordered, does not de facto define the entire person by the same measure. The human person is far more complex than a single factor of personality or orientation to be defined by such narrow definitions, the whole being greater than the sum of its parts and sexuality is but one part of a greater totality. Because of this, it is crucial that it be clearly understood that homosexual orientation in no way represents a rejection by God or the Church. In the words of the Document (2006): “Sometimes the Church is misinterpreted or misrepresented as teach that persons (emphasis document’s) with homosexual inclinations are objectively disordered, as if everything about them were disordered or rendered morally defective by this inclination. Rather, the disorder is in that particular inclination, which is not ordered toward the fulfillment of the natural end of human sexuality” (MPHI, p.6). The person’s inherent dignity

and value as a human being made in the Image of God remains and again, the document is quick to point out that disordered inclinations are not limited to those of a sexual nature; “envy, malice or greed” (p.6) are mentioned specifically the very experiences of desire have been corrupted by sin which brings about a disorder in the desire whatever the cause or source. Again the document emphasizes the fact that the possession of an inclination does not constitute sin in as much as they are outside of our direct willing of it, but acting upon a desire that goes against the purpose of nature as designed by the Creator is always and everywhere a morally culpable or wrong activity.

With the advent of Fletcher’s Situation Ethics, many have difficulty in grasping the concept and fact that there is an objective basis to morality. Moral principles are more than just guidelines that lead to acceptable behavior in a particular culture and timeframe. In Catholicism specifically in its Sacred Tradition, morality is understood as moored in a natural order that came into existence by the design and Will of the Creator; order that is raised and transformed by the movement of Grace through Jesus Christ, good actions experienced as good as a consequence of that Divine Order. Authenticity in humanity is achieved with and through the carrying out of that natural order which ultimately lead to fulfillment and ultimate happiness. Activity not in accord with this natural order so created and ordained by God “are incapable of contributing to true human fulfillment and happiness. In fact, immoral actions are destructive of the human person because they degrade and undermine the human dignity given us by God” (MPHI, 2006, p.7).

The Role (?) of Psychotherapeutic treatment for Homosexual Inclination. Is psychotherapy really helpful in these cases?

It was Sigmund Freud in the early 1950s that

began the study of psychoanalysis and opened the door to modern psychotherapeutic processes (2016, Haggerty M.D., Jim, “History of Psychotherapy” <http://psychcentral.com/lib/history-of-psychotherapy/>). Since that time considerable advances into the study of the human personality and workings of the mind have surfaced. Many insights into mental wellness and illness as well as identity on the personal-sexual levels have been made and methods of crisis intervention and behavior modification have been of service to countless individuals over the years.

In dealing with homosexuality in the document “Ministering to Persons of a Homosexual Inclination” many individuals of a homosexual inclination, “who experience same-sex attraction experience it as an unwanted burden” (MPHI, 2006, p.7). It was not something they chose but rather something with which they were born. Science has no consensus as to what causes homosexual inclination to occur. In like manner, there is no across the board agreement regarding the benefit of therapeutic intervention.

According to the MPHI document, there is some evidence that therapeutic intervention is beneficial for some and the document does encourage those of the Catholic population who struggle with homosexual inclinations and who want to explore the possible benefits of psychotherapy, should engage with counselors who are qualified, “professional who has preparation and competence in psychological counseling and who understands and supports the Church’s teaching on homosexuality. They should also seek out the guidance of a confessor and spiritual director who will support their quest to live a chaste life” (MPHI, 2006, p.7).

In the next installment the roles of Virtue, Chastity and discipline as possible therapeutic approaches in coping with homosexual inclinations will be examined and discussed. **ECL**



SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES

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

AT THE SHORE

Maybe it’s because I’ve always loved the shore that the last chapter of St. John’s Gospel has always been my favorite. While it is part of the 11-week cycle of Resurrection Gospels read at Sunday Matins, John 21 is never read at a Sunday Divine Liturgy, so perhaps many people have never heard it or read it.

The scene is the Sea of Galilee (also called the Sea of Tiberias after the city on its shore) sometime between our Lord’s Resurrection and His Ascension. Seven disciples seem a little bored or lost, like a group of friends stuck together indoors on a rained-out vacation day. When Peter announces, “I’m going fishing” the rest chime in, “We’ll go with you,” as if they’ve been waiting for something—anything—to do.

But why are they even here? Ever since Palm Sunday, all the action has been centered in Jerusalem. A few times, the Risen Lord has mentioned meeting with His disciples in Galilee (Matthew 28:7.16; Mark 16:7). Perhaps the seven are there, waiting, growing impatient with waiting, for the Risen Lord to make His presence known. Or perhaps, like Luke and Cleopas (Luke 24:13-35), they have fled Jerusalem and attempted to return to their former way of life. Either way, as disciples separated from the Lord, they have lost their bearings.

Professional fishermen though they were, the disciples always seem helpless on the sea without Jesus (Mark 6:47-51; Luke 5:1-11), and this time is no exception. They fished all night

and caught nothing. As morning was breaking, someone walking on the shore called out to ask them if they have caught any “food.” Like Luke and Cleopas in Emmaus (Luke 24:16) and Mary Magdalen at the tomb (John 20:14), the disciples did not immediately recognize the Risen Lord (21:4). And the choice of words is telling. Jesus, the Bread of Life (John 6:41.48), asks not about fish but rather about “food.” Without Him, they have no “real food” (John 6:55).

Obedying the mysterious stranger’s suggestion, they cast the net on the right side and take in a catch so large they cannot haul it in themselves. At this moment, the beloved disciple (John himself: John 21:7.20.24) recognizes that “It is the Lord” and Peter dives in to the sea to swim to Je-

sus. Just as at the empty tomb on Pascha: John's vision, inspired by a particular love, enables him to see and believe more quickly than Peter (John 20:3-8).

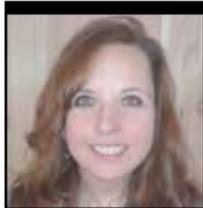
When the group finally reassembles on the shore with their catch, they find that Jesus has prepared breakfast for them: a charcoal fire, some fish, some bread. Each of those details is important. By repeating His gestures from the Last Supper, as at Emmaus, the Risen Lord allows His disciples to recognize Him "in the breaking of the bread" (Luke 24:30-31; John 21:13). It is that same Risen Lord who is present for us in the Eucharist of every Liturgy we celebrate.

Jesus has prepared fish, but He invites the disciples to contribute to the meal, to "bring some of the fish you just caught." He is reaffirming their mission to be "fishers of men" (Luke 5:10). He is preparing them once again to "make disciples of all nations" (Matthew 28:19-20). The Gospel specifies that exactly 156 large fish were caught and there is a hidden meaning in the number. Our Tradition (Matins Canon for Thursday of the 2nd Week of the Fast, Ode 4) sees them as a symbol of all the nations of the world.

Beside that charcoal fire, Jesus helps Peter repent of his triple denial of the Lord beside another charcoal fire on Holy Thursday (John 18:18)

by asking him three times, "Do you love me?" The Lord who serves Peter breakfast commands him to feed the Church entrusted to him, and warns him of how his life will end in a martyrdom like the death he had rashly promised to die for Jesus at the Last Supper (13:36-37).

There is so much in this chapter to console and encourage us: the Lord's providence for His flock, His willingness to meet the disoriented disciples where they are, His gentleness in reconciling with Peter. And it is all summed up in the romantic image of dawn at the shore and breakfast with the Lord. **ECL**



LIFE, LOVE, AND THE HUMAN PERSON

By Ann M. Koshute, MTS

TODAY I MET SOMEONE

As a college theology instructor (mostly online) I don't have an office. The local coffee shop is my desk, with the music coming from the sound system and hum of conversation around me the ambient noise keeping me from nodding off. On this particular day I worked sluggishly at "my desk," trying to write my monthly column. The idea was good, but the words were an alphabet soup of nothing all that significant – or coherent. Frustrated at my lack of creativity, I grabbed my tea and browsed the shops to clear my head. In my bag was my husband's cross on its broken chain. If I couldn't write, I might at least find a nice anniversary present.

The single sales associate in the store was busy with a customer, but asked what I needed. I told her I'd like to replace the broken chain, and she assured me they carried something that might interest me. She excused herself and went into the back room. Another associate emerged, politely questioning me and examining the chain. She showed me some pieces, and we talked about how expensive gold had become, and how we wished we'd gotten some when it was cheaper. Our chat was pleasant, and she was helpful, but a big purchase like this requires some thought. The woman was polite and not at all pushy. She said that if I returned and she wasn't there it was because her husband had recently been hit by a car and was in the hospital. "Oh no!" I said. "What happened?" The woman offered her age (61) and said her husband was older but in relatively good shape. He'd been crossing the street downtown at about nine in the evening. The crosswalk was well-lit and the street is known for its activity, especially on sum-

mer evenings. The man was struck and lay unconscious and covered in blood. Sometime after a woman stopped to help. She hadn't witnessed the accident, but noticed that his shoe had landed on the other side of the street, indicating that a car had likely hit him. As she knelt beside him, in one hand her cell phone, and his hand in the other, she watched two cars drive around them and continue on their way. Listening to this part of the story I couldn't help but recall the parable of the Good Samaritan. Here it was, being told in real life on Main Street, USA.

Eventually the police arrived, along with my jewelry store friend. A twenty-something young woman struck the man and was watching the scene from some distance away, occasionally glancing up as she furiously texted. She'd been delivering a pizza. When the officer approached she simply said, "I hit him." The man regained consciousness, and after a lengthy hospital stay he'll have a difficult recovery ahead. I was dismayed by many aspects of this story: the cold response of the driver, the callous disregard with which other cars swerved around the broken, bleeding man, and the indifference of all but one woman who stopped to help. We spoke about her husband's injuries, his memory loss, and her anxiety over how she'd care for him in their modest home.

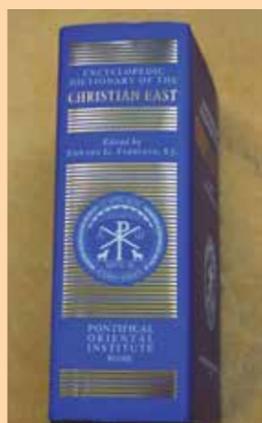
We chatted a few minutes more and then I thanked her and told her I'd think a bit more about the chain. She extended her hand and said, "My name is Lauren. What's yours?" I took her hand, told her my name, and she said, "It's nice to meet you, Ann. I really don't talk this much, but

I guess I felt comfortable with you." "I'm glad," I said. "I don't know if I'll end up buying the chain from you, but I'm grateful you shared your story with me. Write down your husband's name and I'll pray for him. And you, too." Lauren's eyes welled up, and with that I knew I'd better get out of there, or I'd end up bawling myself. She thanked me and we said goodbye.

The column I'd anguished over for hours was okay, but not great. When I left the jewelry store I knew that didn't matter. I knew that this was the story I needed to tell. For a few moments I encountered another person, and she encountered me. Our world seems to have gone mad. Terrorism and violence in city streets aren't scenes from a summer blockbuster; they're shattering lives every day. I can't stop terrorism, or gang violence, or any number of tragedies happening every day. But I can be with someone when she needs to tell her story. I can stop in the middle of my own busy evening, as one woman did to help the man in the street. I can be Christ to someone by following His lead: by not fearing the encounter with another human being, by meeting that person where they are, and by taking the time to be truly present with them. I can stop worrying about silly things (like whether or not I'll be praised for a column), and make space for another in my thoughts, my heart, my prayers, and my time. I can do all of these things. And so can you.

Today I met someone named Lauren, whose husband Joel was struck by a car. I promised to pray for them; perhaps you can as well. Today, I met someone. Maybe you did, too. **ECL**

NEW PUBLICATION FROM THE PONTIFICAL ORIENTAL INSTITUTE



Rome. A new scholarly work, the Encyclopedic Dictionary of the Christian East, a hefty 2000 plus pages volume, has just come off the press this past summer under the editorship of Edward G. Farrugia, S.J., a longtime professor of theology at the Pontifical Oriental Institute. It is a revised and very much expanded volume of the first edition published in Italian in 2000. Since then expanded translations of the dictionary have been done in Romanian, Spanish, and Czech. The major translators of the Italian original into English hail from the Eparchy of Passaic, namely, Fr. Robert F. Slesinski, Ph.D., and Fr. John S. Custer, S.T.D., the rector of St. Michael the Archangel Cathedral in Passaic, New Jersey. In addition to his work as a translator, Fr. Slesinski contributed nine entries

to this encyclopedia-dictionary: "Florenskij, Pavel Aleksandrovič" (with Gerardo Ciofari, O.P.), "Frank, Semyon Ljudvigovič," "Karsavin, Lev Platonovič," "Losev, Aleksej Fëdorovič," "Lossky, Nicholas Onufrievich," "Minsk, Theological Faculty of Sts. Cyril and Methodius," "Radišev, Alexander Nikolaevič," "Russian Religious Philosophy," and "Skovoroda, Hryhori."

Over 150 scholars worldwide participated in this project. American Catholic contributors include Ronald Roberson, CSP, Robert Taft, S.J., and William Toma. American Orthodox contributors include John Behr, Will Cohen, John Erikson, Thomas Fitzgerald, Michael Meerson, Sophia Senyk, and Constantin Simon. Representatives from the Armenian Church include Krikorian Chahinian, Michael Findikyan, and Nina Garsoian.

This finely published encyclopedia-dictionary costs 100 euros or approximately \$130 US. The volume may be purchased from Edizioni Orientalia Christiana, Pontifical Oriental Institute, Piazza S. Maria Maggiore, 7, 00185 Rome, Italy.



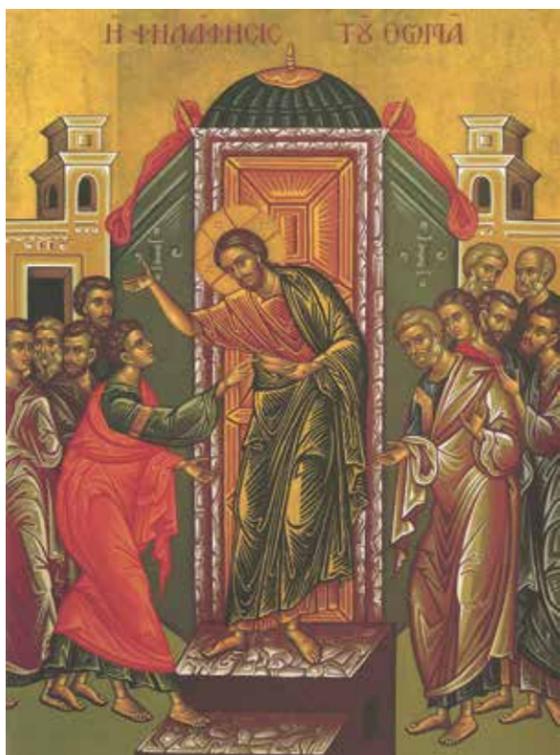
UNDERSTANDING ICONS

Father Joseph Bertha, Ph.D.

COUNSELING THE DOUBTFUL

Installment 10 of 12

When thinking about this work of mercy – offering counsel to the doubtful – two gospel accounts dealing with the sense of touch spring to mind. Perhaps the most famous incident of doubt is that of the Apostle Thomas, and is commemorated on the Sunday after Pascha, even called Thomas (and also Mercy) Sunday. Thomas' doubt is assuaged by the great mercy of Our Lord who allows this skeptic to touch his physical wounds.



Another gospel account also involves God's healing touch: The Lord's parable of the Good Samaritan. Both the robbery victim and the Good Samaritan can be understood as depicting the mercy of God revealed in Christ the Savior. Jesus is robbed of his human nature and is abandoned and left for dead; he also is the Divine Bearer of God's mercy, extending this healing gift to all who are wounded.

Common to both instances in Scripture is the blindness of priests, specifically in regards to noticing the wounds of others. Thomas, one of the apostles is noticeably absent from his brothers on Pascha Sunday when Jesus appears in his resurrection mercy to his followers. Thomas filled with cynicism disbelieves the merciful miracle of new life.

Both a priest and a Levite (both members of the Jewish clergy) overlook the wounded victim laying before them as they pass by oblivious to the needs of others, preoccupied with their own self-centeredness.

This affliction of spiritual doubting, skepticism, and cynicism is not unique to the clergy alone, it impacts all of us in varying degrees and manners. However, this spiritual malaise of doubt is more reprehensible and shameful among the clergy, because their role is to search, support and offer God's mercy to the wounded of this world.

The icon of Thomas (Mercy) Sunday illustrates and educates us on how to offer counsel to the doubtful in a unique detail showing the wounds of our Savior. Jesus is depicted standing before

a golden door (the gate to God's mercy). He wears a loosely wrapped white himation, which is open on his right side in order to reveal the lance wound where blood and water issue forth.

Notice also, the nail prints shown in his hands and feet. It is extremely rare to find the stigmata of Our Lord so overtly displayed in icons. They can only be viewed in icons of the Crucifixion and in the Burial Shroud.

They are shown here in the Thomas icon in order to visualize the mercy of God extended to Thomas. The apostle can actually perceive, physically touch and understand the need to receive God's healing mercy. This is divine compassion extended to the doubter, revealing the healing mercy of God.

At times in our lives amidst the tumult of life, we question God's power, love, even his existence. We can easily fall into a morass of presumption and self-reliance. As we move deeper into this way of thinking we become like the ignorers who bypass the deeply wounded in this life, because we are so wrapped up in our own bounds of skepticism and dwell in a doubt ridden universe.

When we practice this work of mercy, counseling the doubtful, we expose our wounds to our Confessor (Spiritual Director) Jesus Christ. He can probe our deep seated wounds and hurts and offer words of counsel, the soothing medicine of God's merciful forgiveness for our souls. Together with Thomas we can proclaim and profess to Jesus: "My Lord and my God." **ECL**



62nd ANNUAL HOLY DORMITION (ASSUMPTION) PILGRIMAGE

AUGUST 13 – 14, 2016

SISTERS SERVANTS OF MARY IMMACULATE
ST. MARY'S VILLA / SLOATSBURG, NY

Theme: Jesus – the Face of Mercy;
Mary – the Mother of Mercy

The Door of St. Mary's Chapel has been designated an Eparchial Holy Door of Mercy. We encourage all pilgrims to walk through the Door, visit the Chapel and obtain the special blessings of this Jubilee Year of Mercy.

Saturday, August 13

- 12:00 p.m. Food Available at Pavilion
1:00 p.m. Akathist to the Mother of God — Very Rev. John S. Custer SSL, STD, Rector
Choir: Cathedral of St. Michael the Archangel in Passaic, NJ
2:00 p.m. Presentations (listed below)
5:00 p.m. Divine Liturgy – Most. Rev. Peter A. Libasci – Bishop of Manchester Diocese (grotto – English)
Choir: St. Mary's Byzantine Catholic Church, Hillsborough, NJ
Blessing of Water (front of Villa)
7:15 p.m. Teen/ Young Adult Gathering and Discussion (Pavilion)
7:15 p.m. Activity for children – Youth will also participate in the candlelight procession
8:00 p.m. Moleben to the Mother of God with candlelight procession (grotto – English)
Most Rev. Kurt Burnette – Bishop of Passaic Eparchy - main celebrant / homilist
Panakhya – St. Mary's Villa chapel

****No Teen Camp Out****

Sunday, August 14

- 8:30 a.m. Materi Molyty / Mothers in Prayer – Rosary / Singing (St. Mary's Villa Chapel)
10:30 a.m. Pontifical Divine Liturgy with procession to the grotto
followed by blessing of flowers
Most Rev. Stefan Soroka, Metropolitan Archbishop of Philadelphia
Most Rev. Paul Chomnycky, OSBM, Bishop of the Eparchy of Stamford
Most Rev. Bohdan Danylo – Bishop of the Eparchy of Parma
Most Rev. John Bura – Auxiliary Bishop of the Archeparchy of Philadelphia – Homilist
Most Rev. Basil Losten, Bishop Emeritus of the Eparchy of Stamford
Choir: St. Josaphat Church – New Britain, CT
12:00 p.m. Youth Liturgy - Rev. Paul Makar – St. Michael's Ukrainian Church – Cherry Hill, NJ
main celebrant / homilist (chapel – English)
1:00 p.m. Activity & Blessing for children/youth (Terrace)
1:30 p.m. Teen/ Young Adult Gathering and Discussion (Terrace)
1:30 p.m. Blessing of the Sick (St. Mary's Villa Chapel & grotto steps)
Blessing of Religious Articles (in front of St. Joseph's Home)
2:00 p.m. Stations of the Cross – Basilian Father
3:00 p.m. Moleben to the Mother of God (Grotto - Ukrainian)
Most Rev. Bohdan Danylo – main celebrant / homilist
Blessing of cars and buses – Rev. Ivan Tyhovych

**Special Video and Exhibits for the Year of Mercy
on display in the Gallery**

CONFESSION AVAILABLE THROUGHOUT THE ENTIRE WEEKEND

Presentations in English:

2:00 **The Joy of Love: Be the sign of mercy wherever family life exists**
– Most Rev. Bishop Peter Libasci (Bishop Libasci is bi-ritual.)

2:45 **The Gospel of Mercy: St. Luke**
– Sr. Kathleen Hutsko, SSMI

Rt. Rev. Mitred Msgr. John Terlecky, Pilgrimage Spiritual Moderator



SISTERS OF SAINT BASIL TO CELEBRATE 82ND ANNUAL PILGRIMAGE

The 82nd Annual Pilgrimage in honor of Our Lady of Perpetual Help will be held at Mount St. Macrina, September 3 & 4, 2016. This year's theme is "Theotokos: An Inexhaustible Fountain of Mercy," in honor of Pope Francis' declaration of an extraordinary Holy Year of Mercy," stated Sister Ruth.

In March, Metropolitan Archbishop William Skurla dedicated the door to the Shrine of Our Lady of Perpetual Help as a Holy Door of Mercy. Thus, Pilgrims will have the added blessing of passing through the Holy Door when they enter the Shrine to pray.

The very well-attended Anointing of the Sick services will be scheduled for both Saturday and Sunday afternoons rather than two on Sunday. In addition to the Enrichment Sessions usually offered, a Festal Icon Walk is planned for Saturday afternoon. This service will be comprised of various prayers taken from the Feast represented by the respective icon.

As in previous years, the Sisters will welcome all those Pilgrims who come from all over the country. Limited accommodations on the Mount and camping on the racetrack will be available as in the past. Light fare will be available at the Lunch Stand starting on Friday evening. For those arriving early, Compline will

be held at the Shrine Altar on Friday evening. Divine Liturgy will be celebrated on Monday morning, September 5, for those who stay over.

Other plans for the weekend include many opportunities for participation in the Divine Liturgy of the Byzantine Catholic Church. Also scheduled are Matins, Vespers, sacrament of reconciliation, activities for teens and children, and other services in honor of the Mother of God.

The Pilgrimage holds the distinction of being the oldest and the largest Byzantine Catholic Pilgrimage in the country.

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SCHEDULE (Subject to change)

Friday, September 2

7:00 p.m. – Office of Small Compline at Shrine Altar

Saturday, September 3

7:00 a.m. – 12 noon - MYSTERY OF RECONCILIATION (Confessions) House of Prayer Patio

OPENING OF PILGRIMAGE

8:00 a.m. – MATINS at Shrine Altar

9:45 a.m. – Procession with icon of Our Lady of Perpetual Help from House of Prayer to Shrine Altar

10:00 a.m. – DIVINE LITURGY

Welcome: Sister Ruth Plante, OSBM

Divine Liturgy to be followed by procession to Lourdes Grotto for the Solemn Blessing of Water; procession to return to the House of Prayer at the conclusion of the Blessing.

1:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. – MYSTERY OF RECONCILIATION (Confessions) House of Prayer Patio

1:00 p.m. – PARAKLIS at Shrine Altar

2:00 p.m. CHILDREN'S PILGRIMAGE at Children's Tent

ORIENTATION for TEENS at Prayer Garden

ENRICHMENT SESSION at Trinity Center

MYSTERY OF ANOINTING at Shrine Altar

FESTAL ICON SHRINE WALK

3:00 p.m. – TEEN PILGRIMAGE at Prayer Garden

4:00 p.m. – VESPERS with DIVINE LITURGY at Shrine Altar

6:00 p.m. – ENRICHMENT SESSION at Mausoleum

7:15 p.m. – Procession from House of Prayer to Mount Macrina Cemetery

7:30 p.m. – PARASTAS at Mount Macrina Cemetery

CANDLELIGHT PROCESSION (Mount Macrina Cemetery to Shrine Altar)

AKATHIST to OUR LADY OF PERPETUAL HELP

Following Akathist: TEEN SOCIAL at Prayer Garden

YOUNG ADULT SOCIAL at Trinity Center

Sunday, September 4

7:00 a.m. – MATINS at Shrine Altar

7:00 a.m. – DIVINE LITURGY in House of Prayer Chapel

7:30 a.m. - 12 noon – MYSTERY OF RECONCILIATION (Confessions at House of Prayer Patio)

8:30 a.m. – DIVINE LITURGY - Slavonic at Shrine Altar

10:30 a.m. – DIVINE LITURGY at Shrine Altar

12:30 - 5:00 p.m. – MYSTERY OF RECONCILIATION (Confessions at the House of Prayer Patio)

1:00 p.m. – CHILDREN'S PROCESSION with Special Blessing for Youth & Young Adults - from House of Prayer to Mother of God Shrine

1:30 - 2:30 p.m. – MYSTERY OF RECONCILIATION (Confession for the infirm, sick and physically challenged at Manor Gazebo)

2:00 p.m. – CHILDREN'S PILGRIMAGE at Children's Tent

ENRICHMENT SESSION at Trinity Center

TEEN PILGRIMAGE at Prayer Garden

MYSTERY OF ANOINTING at Shrine Altar

3:45 p.m. – Procession from House of Prayer to Mother of God Shrine

4:00 p.m. – DIVINE LITURGY at Mother of God Shrine

Words of Gratitude: Sister Ruth Plante, O.S.B.M.

7:15 p.m. – Procession from House of Prayer to Mother of God Shrine

7:30 p.m. – CANDLELIGHT PROCESSION (Beginning and ending at the Mother of God Shrine)

CLOSING OF THE PILGRIMAGE

Following the Candlelight Procession:

TEEN SOCIAL Prayer Garden

Area

YOUNG ADULT SOCIAL Trin-

ity Center

Monday, September 5

9:30 a.m. – DIVINE LITURGY at Shrine

Altar



SEASONAL REFLECTIONS

Monsignor John. T. Sekellick, JCL



THE CITY OF CORINTH

During the months of July and August, our Sunday epistle readings will be coming from Saint Paul's first and second letters to the Corinthians. Saint Paul spent about a year and half in Corinth where he worked as tent maker and succeeded in converting as many Jews and pagans as he could. Two of his best known converts were Aquila and Priscilla who became his associates in ministry.

Corinth was a large and very prosperous city. Its origins harken back to 5000-3000 B.C., becoming fairly civilized around the 8th Century B.C. under Greek control. Typically, it was also politically corrupt and morally degenerate. Its ruins can be found very near its modern-day location about 48 miles west of Athens on a somewhat narrow stretch of land joining it to the mainland of Greece.

Today it is the second largest city of the Peloponnese and is the focus of interest to pilgrims and tourists. Modern Corinth, like its ancient counterpart, is a center of commerce between northern and southern Greece due to a canal of some four miles connecting the Ionian and Aegean seas. Some 30,000 inhabitants reside there.

Saint Paul visited Corinth twice most likely in the 50's AD and later sent two letters to its Chris-

tian community, first from Ephesus and the second from Macedonia. It was probably during his second visit in the Spring of 58 that he wrote his epistle to the Romans.

Most of the surviving buildings of the ancient city are actually more Roman than Greek after Caesar sacked and rebuilt it. Over time, much of the ancient city has been damaged by recurring earthquakes. Archeological excavations continue today resulting in numerous discoveries of temples, fountains, shops, public baths, temples and other monuments.

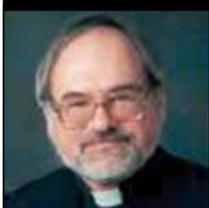
Among its ruins can be found temples dedicated to the pagan gods Aphrodite, Apollo, and Octavia. The temple dedicated to the god of healing, Asklepieion also featured a hospital. A sacred spring is located near the public forum close to the main street named Lechaion. The road itself was twenty to twenty-five feet in width and flanked by raised sidewalks on either side. Its pavement was hard limestone, set in steps discouraging vehicle traffic.

Within the forum is the public platform or bema from which Saint Paul would have pleaded his case when he was brought up on charges before the Roman governor, Gallio (Acts 18:12-17). Within the forum still today can be seen the

Peirene Fountain which supplied the city with water. Curiously, the fountain bears the name of a mother (Peirene) who wept so hard when her son died, that she finally dissolved into the spring which still is flowing there.

Because of its strategic location as a hub of commerce and perhaps even its notoriety, Corinth was prey to invasion and conquering armies. In 267 AD, with the invasion of the Herulians, the city fell into intense decline. The barbarian, Alaric, completely destroyed the city in 396 and sold many of its citizens into slavery. Nonetheless, the city remained inhabited through other invasions, destructions and even plagues. It fell in 1204 to the Fourth Crusade and was captured by the Turks in 1458. The Knights of Malta regained it in 1612, but in 1687, the Venetians occupied and controlled it until 1715 when the Turks returned. In 1822 the city finally came into Greek hands.

Next month we will continue with a presentation on Saint Paul's two letters to the Church at Corinth. They are among the most illuminating documents in all of Christian literature and provide not only immense insight into many aspects of Saint Paul's teaching but also on typical problems that arose in the early Church.. **BCL**



THE BYZANTINE LITURGY

By Archpriest David Petras, SEOD

THE NEED FOR ECUMENISM

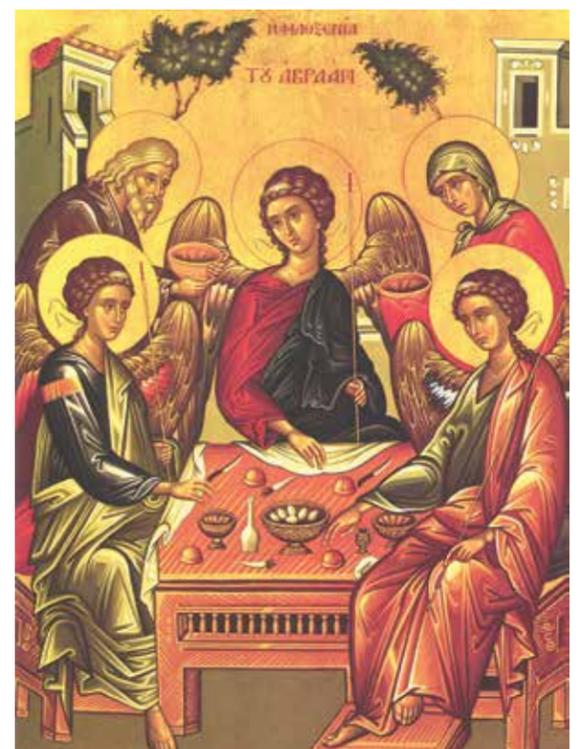
The story of creation is told in the first chapters of the Book of Genesis. The creation of human beings is described in this way: "Then God said: 'Let us make human beings in our image, after our likeness. Let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, the tame animals, all the wild animals, and all the creatures that crawl on the earth. God created mankind in his image; in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. (Genesis 1:26-27)'" God made all the rest of creation for our benefit. Our place in the universe is privileged, for we are in the image of God. Therefore, God can have a relationship with us. One might ask if God created us because he needed us. This cannot be the case, since God is before all creation. In his eternal being he has no need of another, but instead he created us out of pure love, in order to share the gift of existence with another. And so we alone, of all creatures, can look upon the whole universe and give glory to God who brought it into being.

The truth of God is that he is one, as he commanded Moses, "I am the Lord your God...You shall not have other gods beside me. (Exodus 20:2-3)" Yet we see a subtlety in the description of creation, for God says, "Let us make human beings in our (plural) image ..." This might have been a grammatical plural, but the Church fathers have seen in this a foreshadowing of the Holy

Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. There is one God in three persons, as St. Gregory the Theologian strongly affirms: "Each person considered in himself is entirely God. . . I have not even begun to think of unity when the Trinity bathes me in its splendor. I have not even begun to think of the Trinity when unity grasps me. . (Oratio 40, 41)"

What this means is that if God is one in three persons, then we, the human race, made up of billions of persons, are also called to unity if we are in the image of God. This is confirmed by Jesus' prayer after the Last Supper when he was about to be arrested: "Holy Father, keep them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one just as we are, (John 17:11)" and "I in them and you in me, that they may be brought to perfection as one, that the world may know that you sent me, and that you loved them even as you loved me.(John 17:23)" This is our perfection, that we live in unity just as the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are one. In its worship, the Church prays for God's will, "for the stability of the holy Churches of God, and for the union of all, let us pray to the Lord." (Litany of Peace, third petition)

We need to renew our commitment to ecumenism, particularly defined as the communion of all Churches who believe in Christ. Our Lord himself taught that there was only to be one sheepfold, "I am the good shepherd, and I know mine



Icon of the Holy Trinity

and mine know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I will lay down my life for the sheep. I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. These also I must lead, and they will hear my voice, and there will be one flock, one shepherd. (John 10:14-16)" My faith is certainly that there is "one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church." Unfortunately, Christianity is now broken up into a number of communions

and jurisdictions, so that those outside of Christianity cannot see a unified witness. As Catholics, we hold with the Vatican II Constitution on the Church that “This Church (the one Church of Christ) constituted and organized in the world as a society, subsists in the Catholic Church, which is governed by the successor of Peter and by the Bishops in communion with him, although many elements of sanctification and of truth are found outside of its visible structure. These elements, as gifts belonging to the Church of Christ, are forces impelling toward catholic unity. (§ 8)” As the Council teaches, the Spirit does work outside the visible community of the Catholic Church, and because of that, we are able to engage in dialogue and discussion with others. The Orthodox Church also has committed itself to ecumenical dialogue over the last century, and the Catholic Church gives a special place to the Orthodox

Church as a sister Church in the apostolic faith (*Unitatis Redintegratio* §§ 14-18).

Unfortunately, there are a number of reactionary Christians who resist dialogue. They are in theological error, for our Lord proclaimed that his mission was to bring about the unity of all his sheep, and for us to deny that this is possible is heresy. Why this opposition? Because of a reckless zeal? James and John asked Jesus to send fire from heaven upon the heretic Samaritans, but Jesus rebuked them, “For the Son of Man did not come to destroy men’s lives but to save them. (Luke 9:56)” Does it come from a spirit of self-righteousness, that sees nothing good in the other, not even the image of God? There must not be any more burning of heretics at the stake. The gift of martyrdom belongs to the true Christian only. I believe that Catholics and Orthodox already share the same faith, that it remains only

for us to discover this through honest, loving and fearless dialogue.

Some may fear that ecumenism means “compromise,” but what it really means is the search for the fullness of truth. The truth is that “God is love, (1 John 4:8)” and love flows from the Holy Trinity. The writer C. S. Lewis, who converted to Christian faith, wrote: “All sorts of people are fond of repeating the Christian statement that ‘God is love.’ But they seem not to notice that the words ‘God is love’ have no real meaning unless God contains at least two persons. Love is something that one person has for another person. If God was a single person, then before the world was made, He was not love.” Our thirst for ecumenism must come from the desire to do the will of God, to “seek first the kingdom of God,” one in the Holy Trinity, and one in the multitudes of the human race. **ECL**



SCHOOL OF PRAYER

Father G. Scott Boghossian

HIDDEN MEDITATION—TALKING TO YOURSELF

Saint Paul the Apostle uses athletic metaphors to describe the Christian life. The apostle writes of the spiritual life in terms of running a race, or boxing in a boxing match (1 Cor. 9:26). In the Christian tradition we use the term *asceticism* from the Greek word for athletic “exercise” or “training” to describe the process of withdrawing from sensual pleasures and worldly concerns that would hinder our growth in holy living. To be successful in athletics, a man or woman must eat properly, exercise and train, and hone their skills in order to win. In the Christian life, we must do the same if we are going to “win the crown of righteousness” on Judgment Day (2 Tim. 4:8).

Today, experts in the field of Sports Psychology study how psychological factors impact athletic performance and teach techniques to help athletes succeed. These techniques may include goal setting, imagery, performance routines, and self-talk. Scientific research in Sports Psychology suggests that self-talk and positive affirmations do in fact increase the confidence and improve the performance of athletes. There is a kind of self-talk that is practiced in the Christian tradition that helps believers succeed in spiritual combat. The ancient fathers of the desert engaged in a practice that they called in Greek *krypte melete*, or in English, “hidden meditation.” Hidden meditation involved the use of “soliloquy,” that is, talking to oneself. Yes, it’s a good thing to talk

to yourself! The holy fathers recited verses from scripture, or the sayings of the elders, or might have even preached a short sermon to themselves. In this way, the saving truths of the gospel were transferred from mind to heart.

In order to reach our heavenly goal, we also should use gospel-centered self-talk and scriptural affirmations. Let’s suppose that we are troubled by anxiety and worry. First, find a biblical text that addresses that problem. Philippians 4:6-7 says, “do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” Next, turn it into a first person affirmation, like, “I am not anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, I let my requests be made known to God. And the peace of God which passes all understanding guards my heart and mind in Christ Jesus.” Repeat this biblical affirmation over to yourself several times a day, paying close attention to the words. Realize that there is special grace and power attached to these words, because they are inspired and authored by the Holy Spirit.

Go to the book of Psalms. There you will find King David’s “self-talk” from which you can draw strength, as the great saints have done for

thousands of years. Do you lack confidence and courage under life’s trials? Say with David, “The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The LORD is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?” (Ps. 27:1), or the whole of Psalm 23, “the LORD is my shepherd, I shall not want... etc.”

If we need guidance, we can apply Proverbs 3:6-7 to ourselves: “I trust in the Lord with all my heart, I do not lean on my own understanding. In all my ways I acknowledge Him, and He directs my paths.”

There is a biblical verse for just about every problem we may face. It’s up to us to know and study the Bible so that we can find the biblical verse most appropriate to “renew our minds” (Rm. 12:2), and to encourage ourselves in the Lord (1 Sam. 30:6). Of course, just saying these verses once or twice probably won’t make a great difference. But if we say them frequently throughout the day, our faith will flourish, our attitude will improve, and we will grow closer to God.

Saint Paul compares the spiritual life to a race and a fight. Like any athletic endeavor, Christian living calls for persistence, courage, and mental toughness. All of these qualities come to us by God’s grace. Let us use the “encouragement of the scriptures” (Rm. 15:4); i.e., positive self-talk built on the word of God, to win the race and receive our heavenly reward..**ECL**

Do you know someone involved in an adoption in New Jersey in the past? They’ve changed the laws about privacy and information can now be obtained.

Redaction request, contact preference, and social/cultural/medical history forms can be submitted via mail or electronically. They are available online at AdoptionRecords.nj.gov. The New Jersey Catholic Conference has instituted a helpline that anyone can call to get more information about the changes to the law: 609-989-4809. More information is also available on the group’s website: www.njcathconf.com.

THE BYZANTINE CATHOLIC EPARCHY OF PASSAIC subscribes to the

Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People

adopted by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. The Eparchy, within all its parishes, institutions and programs, is committed to assuring a safe environment in ministry for its children and young people that conforms to Charter requirements.

For further information regarding the Eparchial Safe Environment Program please contact:
Father David J. Baratelli, Ed.S., M.Div. • *Safe Environment Program Coordinator* • 973.890.7777
Dr. Maureen Daddona, Ph.D. • *Eparchial Victim Advocate* • 516.457.5684



SPIRITUAL REFLECTIONS

Father Lewis Rabayda

TRAINING IN THE SPIRITUAL LIFE

Author's note: These articles are not usually written from a first person perspective, but on occasion these personal experiences can be worth sharing.

One of my hobbies which keeps me balanced and healthy is single track mountain biking. I grew up mountain biking and I have continued with it on and off through my early adult life, but now am back at it. I prefer mountain to road biking because you really get to experience nature in all of its beautiful plant and animal life, its vistas, and especially its solitude. All you know is where you are on the trail now, the present terrain to navigate, and the fact that you must keep pushing on to the next bend, the next hill, the next group of rocks and roots to maneuver through. On the trail, it doesn't matter where you were or where you may be in a mile, but only where you are right now.

On my way back from biking up the Broad Mountain across the valley from where I now reside, I biked around town a little bit before I came home. As I was slowly biking up a very steep hill to return to the rectory, a group of three teenagers were walking down the hill. One of the girls said to me in all sincerity, "Good job, I couldn't do that." I was panting a bit from slowly creeping up this very steep hill and too worried about breathing to say some-

thing witty in reply. But I would have said to her, "If you don't push yourself, you'll never know what you are capable of." Indeed, all great human achievement has been accomplished because people actively chose to push already existing limits. We do great things when we do not settle for the minimum or the easiest established methods. While biking, I considered going back early because I thought that I shouldn't push myself too much too early in the season because of how unfit I am from an inactive winter. But I decided against that and kept going. Not so much to my surprise, I felt fine the whole trip and at no point was I about to fall over in exhaustion. If I would have quit early, I wouldn't have known how far my body could really go.

Our experience with the spiritual life is subject to the same concepts of effort. We may not know our true abilities, we may not experience profound benefits of prayer, we may not know the true graces we receive in the sacraments, and we may not be able to experience a deep intimacy with God unless we push ourselves to go beyond the current habits of our spiritual life. Whether we are completely new to the faith, whether we have never prayed in our lives, or whether we attend daily liturgy and pray the rosary or hours every day, there is always more that

we can do, more that we can learn, and more corporal works of mercy for us to perform for the benefit of our fellow man. But if we do not heed the warnings of Christ to completely and actively devote ourselves to Him and His Church, then we underestimate the level of devotion that God has called us to, as well as underestimate the gifts of God's Grace that He will give us in return for our belief in Him. If we subscribe to the train of thought that an active devotion to God was something for our parents and grandparents, something for the 'holy lady' or the 'altar server' in church and not for me, then we are like that teenager, who sees someone else accomplishing something, but thinks that accomplishment is for others and not them self.

Why do we have to give such an effort? Can't we just truly believe in Jesus and be saved? No, Tradition and Scripture say that it is not enough. All through the New Testament we are told that there is a balance of faith and works that we must do to truly be Christian. Jesus Himself prayed that He preferred to not undergo the crucifixion if it was at all possible, but in the end, Jesus assented to the Will of the Father. It is only after we prove that we can go through these difficult trials that God really knows our devotion. It is not enough to want to do good, but

rather, are proved when we actually perform good. When we actually set aside the necessary time for serious prayer, we prove to ourselves and to God that we are serious enough about worshiping Him that we are willing to give more than just one hour per week, and possibly more than one hour each day. Just as Jesus sacrificed, so too must we give real meaningful sacrifice to God. And when we sacrifice a little bit more each time, when we get to that moment of thinking about praying, but then usually don't, then it is time to surprise ourselves, and give in to that good invitation from our conscience to pray. When we are praying and want to stop, then it is also a good challenge for us to push ourselves further and to continue our prayer for a little while longer. When Sunday Divine Liturgy is over, it is a good challenge for us to stay and bask in the presence of God just a little while longer and thank Him for the precious gift of salvation. In the end, we won't know what we are capable of, if we do not push ourselves to a stronger devotion to Christ. And when we do, just like when we push our bodies, we will experience a great spiritual benefit that will leave us wanting even more. **ECL**

UPCOMING EVENTS FOR JULY

Eparchial and Parish Events

Slava Isusu Christu! Slava vo v'iki!

Eastern Catholic Life

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4 Independence Day
*National Holiday * Chancery closed*

7-10 ByzanTEEN National Youth Rally
Notre Dame College, OH

17-20 Altar Server Congress
*Canadensis, PA * See ad on page 7 of this issue*

20 Holy Prophet Elias * Divine Liturgy for Saint Ann Novena
Saint Ann Basilica, Scranton