



EASTERN CATHOLIC LIFE

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TOGETHER ON THE MARGINS

Lesbos trip to be ecumenical sign of service

By Cindy Wooden Catholic News Service; April 13, 2016; Photos Courtesy of Catholic News Service



Pope Francis and Patriarch Bartholomew embrace and greet the crowd

Before Saint John Paul II arrived in Greece in 2001, there were protests by Orthodox faithful and an all-night prayer vigil by Orthodox monks on Mount Athos, praying that the pope would not come.

But things have changed. “You see it, you hear it and it’s huge,” said Maristella Tsamatropoulou, spokeswoman for Caritas Hellas, the Catholic charity in Greece.

Caritas and Apostoli, the Greek Orthodox charitable agency, have signed a formal cooperation agreement and have been working together for years. First, they sought to respond to the needs created by Greece’s major economic crisis and, now, they have joined forces to help the tens of thousands of refugees stuck in the country.

Working together has led to better relations between Orthodox and

Catholics generally, Tsamatropoulou said in a telephone interview April 12. “Obviously, we are a small minority and there still are some bishops and monks who are hostile to Catholics, but their numbers are decreasing.” Catholics make up less than 2 percent of the Greek population.

“The personality of this pope has helped,” the Caritas spokeswoman said. “We hear from believers and nonbelievers, ‘You have an extraordinary boss.’”

Pope Francis and Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople were scheduled to visit Lesbos, Greece, April 16 to highlight the plight of the refugees and migrants.

Jesuit Father David Nazar, rector of the Pontifical Oriental Institute in Rome, said he believes that for Pope Francis, as well as for Patriarch Bar-

tholomew, the primary motive of the Lesbos meeting is “compassion for the world; it’s pastoral.”

Although not planned as an “ecumenical meeting,” he said, their gesture can “show the unity of believers, show what God wants to happen in the world” and shine light on a situation of human suffering.

For many Christians, the official Catholic-Orthodox theological dialogue, while necessary for establishing full unity, is dealing with issues far removed from their everyday lives. Even with different opinions on the best political policies needed to deal with the refugee crisis, the outreach of the pope and patriarch is something very concrete.

For Catholics, a pope’s involvement in the refugee issue is much more natural than a patriarch’s outreach would be for many Orthodox, Father Nazar said. The Catholic

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POPE NAMES PAPAL NUNCIO TO MEXICO TO BE NEW NUNCIO TO THE UNITED STATES

Article and Photo By Catholic News Service



Mexico since 2007, to be the new apostolic nuncio to the United States.

He succeeds Archbishop Carlo Maria Viganò, who has held the post since 2011. Archbishop Viganò turned 75 in January, the age at which canon law requires bishops to turn in their resignation to the pope.

As president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, Archbishop Joseph E. Kurtz of Louisville, Kentucky, shared “a heartfelt greeting and my prayerful support” of the newly-named nuncio “as he embarks on his service to our country.”

“A shared closeness with the church in Mexico already creates a strong fraternal bond between us,”

said the archbishop about the April 12 appointment.

“With fond affection, allow me also to thank Archbishop Viganò for his selfless contributions to the life of the Catholic Church in the United States,” Archbishop Kurtz added.

A nuncio is a Vatican diplomat with the rank of ambassador. He is responsible for diplomatic relations with the government, but also serves as the pope’s representative to the church in a given country, which includes responsibility for coordinating the search for and vetting of candidates to become bishops.

Christophe-Louis-Yves-Georges Pierre was born Jan. 30, 1946, in Rennes in France’s Brittany region,

where his family has had roots for many generations. He first attended school at Antsirabe in Madagascar, pursued his secondary education at the College of Saint-Malo in France and also spent one year in Morocco at Lycee Francais of Marrakesh.

He entered Saint-Yves seminary in Rennes in 1963, but he interrupted his studies for two years of military service in 1965 and 1966. He was ordained a priest of the Archdiocese of Rennes at the Cathedral of Saint-Malo April 5, 1970.

Then-Father Pierre earned his master’s degree in theology at the Institut Catholique de Paris and his doctorate in canon law in Rome. He was parochial vicar of the parish

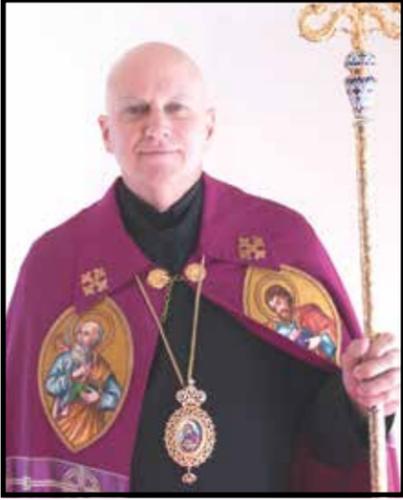
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I LIFT UP MY EYES...

Pastoral Reflections of Bishop Kurt



ALL SUCCESS DEPENDS ON GOD

An Interview of Bishop Gerald Dino continued from the March Issue

A few months ago, Bishop Gerald Dino was kind enough to give an interview for our eparchial newspaper. A son of this Eparchy, Bishop Gerald is the fourth bishop of Phoenix. When he was consecrated, it was called the Eparchy of Van Nuys. In the first part of the interview, we heard how he found out that he was going to be the bishop of “vuhnuhs”. He thought to himself, “Where the heck is vuhnuhs?” Then he realized the Nuncio was saying Van Nuys. His life has been different ever since that phone call in 2007, just shy of his 68th birthday. Bishop Dino is now over 75, and is waiting for the Holy Father to accept his resignation.

Returning to his early years as a priest, in the last interview, we heard about his life up through his time as assistant pastor with Monsignor Gaydos in Perth Amboy, NJ, someone Bishop Dino describes as “a big guy at that time”. After Perth Amboy, Father Gerald Dino became a pastor himself for the first time in Dunellen.

Bishop Gerald: I was in Dunellen one year. Small very dynamic parish, wonderful people.

Bishop Kurt: What did you learn your first time as pastor?

Bishop Gerald: How to work with the people, and how to deal with the people who want to control you as pastor, and who don't respect your authority. Someone said to me, “You're a small guy, Father, but when you got up in the pulpit, you looked like you were ten feet tall.”

The women in that parish made kolachi; they had like 800 orders. I told them to take only the orders that you can fulfill in a time limit. I also told them, no baking before Christmas during the children's party. They ignored me and baked anyway. You couldn't hear the kids because of all the noise. I had to go into the kitchen to quiet them, and they mouthed off to me!

The next day I told them from the pulpit: what if someone wanted to come to our church and were scandalized by the the parish, especially the gossip? What will he find here? Will he be scandalized by you people? The next week, the two main culprits resigned from the parish, and two of the finest women took over and made more money than the others made.

Bishop Kurt: What happened after Dunellen?

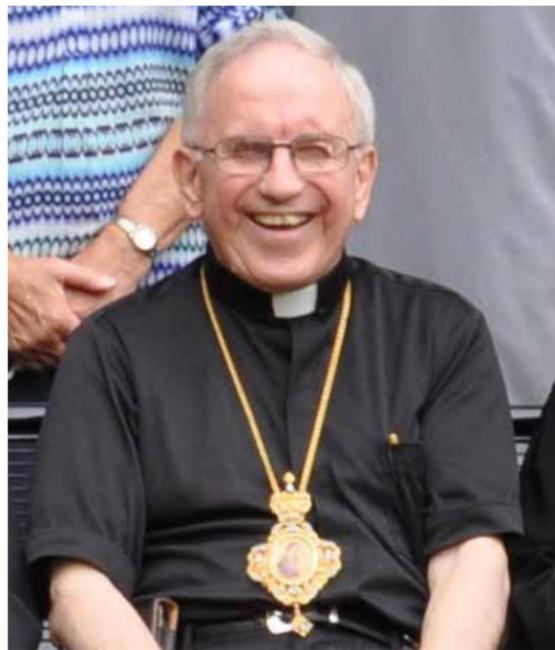
Bishop Gerald: I went to Rome for two years. I studied dogma and patrology at the Oriental Institute, and received a licentiate in Oriental Ecclesiastical Sciences. (Bishop Gerald went on to say that his degree OCEL means something funny in both Italian and *Russky*, but you'll have to guess that for yourself.)

Bishop Kurt: Who was the pope?

Bishop Gerald: Paul VI. I met him. The *Casa* (where we lived) had a private audience with him. It was the time of *Humanae Vitae*. Our rector was Bishop James Hickey. (Later Cardinal Hickey) There were five of us there from our Church: then-Fathers Andrew Pataki, Myron Hornyak, Michael Moran, Raymond Balta, and I.

Bishop Kurt: What was inspiring about your time in Rome?

Bishop Gerald: I took a trip to Russia in about 1971 at Easter. One of the American colleges with a campus in Rome sponsored a trip to Eastern Europe over Easter vacation. Several priests and I went with them. We were in Moscow in the main cathedral for Orthodox Easter. We had to go through five checkpoints where the police tried to discourage us from entering. We talked Italian so they wouldn't know we were American. They let us through with some difficulty thinking we were Italians. We got to one point where we almost entered the church, but we didn't have the correct Russian passport. So we went around to the back of the church, and went to a door to a sacristy and the priests and bishops told us we couldn't come in. Finally a secret door opened to a cellar, and a man directed us through the door, and we went in and he put us in a fairly empty section, in one of the transepts, blocked off from the main section.



Bishop Gerald Dino

It was Easter Matins, Resurrection Matins. About midway through, the main church was so jam-packed, so the whole mass of people began to sway back and forth, and we learned later the communists would put people in the back who would shove the crowd. Ladies started screaming and yelling. So I got up on a soap box to quiet the people in my section, and I said, “tikho budete,” and they all looked at me with a look of fear, as though they thought I was a communist. So they immediately stopped screaming, and then I said,

“Spivajut Christos voskres,” and they all began singing.

There were five of us from the NAC (Pontifical North American College). One was a nurse. If someone fainted they would hand them over the balustrade to our section and she would take care of them. So we stayed there for a while longer. It was already 2:00 in the morning, and people were asking us not to leave.

Bishop Kurt: Was that the most exciting Easter service of your life?

Bishop Gerald: Oh yes. For sure. Going in, at one point, six policemen hovered around, and made us very nervous. One guy started speaking English to us, and so someone said, “We understood there was freedom of religion here.” So the policeman threw his hands up and said, “Go!”

The taxi that took us there wouldn't go near the church. He said, “No. No church.” And he let us off a few blocks away. There were crowds of people around the church shouting and waving their fists at anyone going into the church.

Bishop Kurt: What else happened while you lived in Europe?

Bishop Gerald: On another occasion I went to Constantinople. I was in a square outside Hagia Sophia, and a photographer came up to me with a live bear. And he said, “I take your picture.” Then he demanded \$20.00, and I refused. So he began yelling, and the bear started making noises too. Across the street there was an outdoor coffee bar full of students, and they called the police, and the police came and shut down the entire square and arrested the photographer. So I got out of the square as quickly as I could. I melted into the crowd and got away.

Bishop Kurt: What was inspiring about Rome?

Bishop Gerald: What was inspiring in Rome was visiting the graves of so many saints, and being able to pray at their tombs—just the whole history—and the variety of cultures represented by all the people studying there—being at the papal ceremonies in the square and the basilica.

Bishop Kurt: Did you eat out a lot?

Bishop Gerald: The food at the *Casa* was so good that we didn't eat out. But usually we went down to the Trevi Bar after dinner and watched the tourists throw coins in the fountain, almost every night. It was jammed with tourists all the time. My favorite restaurant was at the Dodici Apostoli (Twelve Apostles).

to be continued...

+Kurt Brunette



FROM THE OFFICE OF THE BISHOP COLLEGE OF CONSULTORS

On the advice of the College of Consultors, Bishop Kurt has augmented the College of Consultors. The College now consists of the following nine priests in order by seniority from ordination:

Very Rev. Marcel Szabo (7/11/1971)

Very Rev. Robert Hospodar (5/14/1978)

Very Rev. John Basarab (5/20/1979)

Very Rev. Robert Evancho (5/20/1979)

Very Rev. Peter Hosak (7/30/1983)

Very Rev. Michael Popson (5/10/1987)

Rt. Rev. James Hayer (5/14/1989)

Very Rev. Gary Mensinger (7/7/1998)

Very Rev. Mykhaylo Prodanets (7/24/2001).

May God grant them many years!

CLERGY APPOINTMENTS

Rev. Edward Cimbala is appointed to the office of Director of Clergy Formation. This newly created office is to shepherd men who are already ordained to the priesthood in another confession and have expressed an interest in becoming presbyters for the Eparchy of Passaic.

Rev. Lewis Rabayda is appointed Parochial Vicar for the parishes of Saint John the Baptist in Lansford, Pennsylvania and Saint Mary in Nesquehoning, Pennsylvania.

Rev. Mykhaylo Kravchuk is appointed Parochial Vicar for Saint Michael in Pittston, Pennsylvania.

Very Rev. Robert Hospodar, JCL is relieved of the office of Chancellor of the Eparchy of Passaic. The Eparchy of Passaic thanks Father Hospodar for service as Chancellor and Assistant Chancellor since 1982!

Rev. Deacon Nicholas Daddona is appointed Chancellor of the Eparchy of Passaic, effective April 20, 2016

+FATHER MICHAEL J. MONDIK REPOSES IN THE LORD



Father Michael J. Mondik, a retired priest of the Eparchy of Passaic, fell asleep in the Lord on March 3, 2016, in Phoenix, AZ. Most recently, Father Michael had been the Pastor of Saint Thomas the Apostle Church in Rahway, NJ, until his retirement on July 1, 2015.

A native of Pottstown, PA, and a parish-son of Saint John the Baptist Church in Pottstown, Father Michael was born on June 16, 1947, to John Mondik and Beatrice Clouser. Following his graduation from high school in 1965, Father Michael



Bishop Kurt and Bishop Gerald pray the prayer of oil with Father Edward Higgins assisting

entered Saints Cyril and Methodius Byzantine Catholic Seminary in Pittsburgh, PA. He graduated from Duquesne University in 1969 and was ordained to the Priesthood of Jesus Christ by Bishop Michael at Saint Michael Cathedral in Passaic, NJ, on July 1, 1973.

His priestly assignments included service in the following parishes of the Eparchy: Saint Michael Church, Perth Amboy, NJ; Saint Michael Cathedral, Passaic, NJ; Saint Mary Church, Trenton, NJ; Holy Wisdom Church, Flanders, NJ; Saint Nicholas Church, Swoyersville, PA; Saint Michael Church, Pittston, PA; Saints Peter and Paul Church, Minersville, PA; and, most recently, Saint Thomas the Apostle Church, Rahway, NJ, until his retirement from active ministry in July, 2015.

During his years of priestly ministry, Father Michael also had Eparchial appointments as Protopresbyter (Dean); Syncellus (Episcopal Vicar); and Eparchial Consultor. He was also the Chairman of the Eparchial Building and Liturgical Arts Commission and a member of the Inter-eparchial Liturgy Commission, a position he retained even into his retirement. Well-known for his love of liturgy, and well-regarded for his expertise in liturgical matters, Father Michael also served as Liturgical Master of Ceremonies for four Eparchial Bishops over three decades. In appreciation for his years of priestly ministry, he was awarded a jeweled pectoral cross by Bishop Kurt in June, 2015.

Father Michael was preceded in death by his parents, John and Bea-

trice, as well as by his brother, Stephen. He is survived by his brother, David and his wife, Deborah; his aunt, Helen Grayouskie, and her husband, Stanley; cousins, Robert Nesspor, Robert, Jr. and his wife, Hannah, and son, Robbie; nephew, Christopher Mondik, wife Kristen and children, Stephanie and Christopher; and nephew, Mark Mondik, wife Janet and son, Mason.

The body of Father Michael lay in state at his former parish of Saint Thomas the Apostle Church in Rahway, NJ, on Thursday and Friday, March 10th and 11th, with prayer services conducted each evening at 7PM. The funeral was celebrated Saturday, March 12, at 9AM, with a Hierarchical Divine Liturgy celebrated by Bishop Kurt Burnette and Bishop Gerald Dino, Bishop of the Eparchy of Phoenix, AZ, Father Michael's friend since seminary days and homilist.

In his homily, Bishop Gerald recalled that Father Michael had really admired a funeral homily he had heard him give and so he decided to preach it again at Father Michael's funeral, considering that was his request. Bishop Gerald told the story of Saint Polycarp and how he met his martyrdom with rejoicing, much to the astonishment of the pagan torturers and executioners. Equally amazing to the pagans was the joy with which the Christians

collected the relics of Saint Polycarp and then, even more, the Christians would celebrate each on the day of his death. The early Christians considered the date of your death as the date of your second "birthday" - this time, into heaven. Therefore, Bishop Gerald said, we could consider March 3rd to be Father Michael's new birthday - into heaven. Bishop Kurt also gave remarks in which he recalled how exacting Father Michael could be with the celebration of the Liturgy, but that it was all done because of Father Michael's love for God and wanting everything to be perfect for the worship of God.

Con-celebrating were Father Marcel Szabo, Syncellus of the New Jersey Syncellate; Father John Cigan, Saint Mary Byzantine Catholic Church, Wilkes-Barre; Father John Zeyack, pastor emeritus of Saint Thomas Parish; Father Steve Galuschik, All Saints Parish, Fort Myers, FL; and Father James Spera, a biritual priest from the Archdiocese of Newark, NJ. Also serving were Deacons Charles Laskowski and Thomas Shubeck of Saint Thomas Parish. Internment followed at Saint John the Baptist Byzantine Catholic Cemetery in Pottstown, PA. *May his memory be eternal!*



Brother priests from the Eparchy of Passaic and other jurisdictions



PEOPLE YOU KNOW AROUND THE EPARCHY

IN SAINT PETERSBURG...

A Surprise Visit

On Tuesday of Bright Week (Day of Emmaus), Father Michael Chubirko, SDB, (Age 92) a retired priest from our Eparchy living at the Salesian House in Tampa, FL, traveled to Saint Therese Church in Saint Petersburg, FL, to attend Divine Liturgy and enjoy a breakfast with the Pastor, Father Robert Evancho.



Father Michael Chubirko and Father Robert Evancho

11 DAY PILGRIMAGE TO ITALY & AMALFI

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BYZANTINE WOMEN'S WEEKEND RETREAT

VILLA OF OUR LADY RETREAT HOUSE
MT. POCONO, PA

MAY 20-22, 2016

Starts Friday, May 20, at 6 p.m., and ends Sunday, May 22, about 1 p.m.

Cost is \$166 for private room and \$151 for shared room.

A \$40 deposit is required by May 7, 2016, with no refunds.

For additional information or to make a reservation, please call
570.453.3163

LET YOUR SOUL REJOICE IN THE LORD 2016 ALTAR SERVER CONGRESS

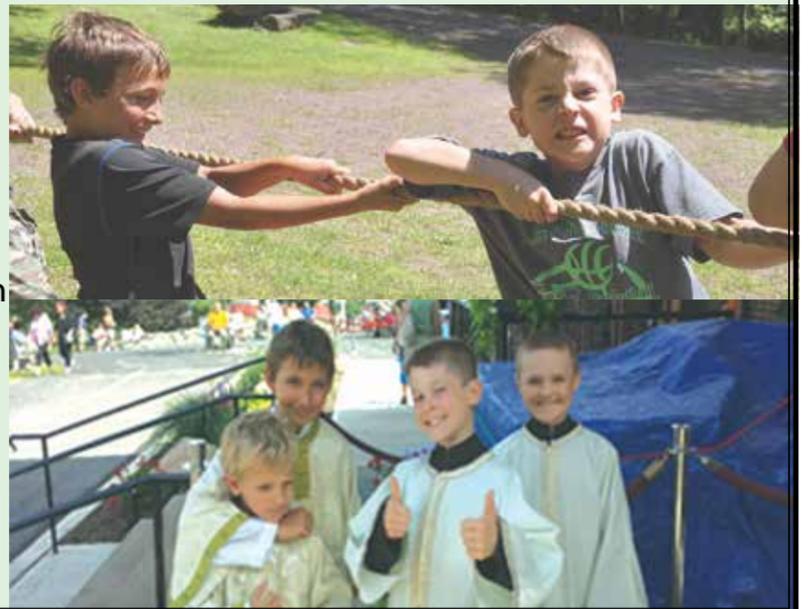
JULY 17TH – JULY 20TH 2016
AGES 6-17

Carpathian Village Canadensis, PA

Come and experience a wonderful fun filled Event with fellow altar servers from across the Eparchy of Passaic. Have fun while learning more about your important role as an Altar Server! This Event is underwritten by the Eparchy Register by July 1st

<http://www.eparchyofpassaic.com/passaic.htm>

For questions and details contact Deacon Stephen Russo:
DcnStephen@gmail.com



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WELCOME TO AMERICA

New Priest Acclimates to New Culture

By Father Ronald Hatton



Pan'i Maria and Father Ihor Vorontsov

Healthstatus.com says that moving is the third most stressful thing a family or person can do. Imagine moving to a new town. Then to a new state. Now try to imagine moving to a new country! Everything you have known and loved is left behind. The culture is different; you have to deal with a new language, new driving laws, buying a new car. Where do you shop? Which are the best supermarkets in your area? And for your children: the stress of unfamiliar surroundings and people who do not understand you when you are speaking quite clearly to them are just a couple of stressors that the children must deal with - and then YOU have to deal with THEIR stress as well as your own!

Our eparchy has seen a number of married priests and their families come to start a new life serving our parishes in recent years. Last November, we had such a case come into our lives here at our parishes of Saint Nicholas in Danbury, CT and White Plains, NY. When Bishop Kurt brought Father

Ihor Vorontsov into the Eparchy from Croatia, it was felt best for him to "learn the ropes" with Father Ronald Hatton, Pastor of Saint Nicholas in Danbury, before taking up residence in Saint Nicholas in White Plains. In late January, Father Ihor returned to Croatia to bring his wife, Maria, and their two daughters, Anastasia (4) and Margareta (2), to join him. Much repair was needed for the rectory in White Plains, and Deacon Stephen Russo and his wife, Heather, offered the Vorontsov family to reside with them until they could move in. Heather decided that the parishioners of Saint Nicholas should have a surprise "Welcome Shower" for the family as they moved to their new home, so on Saturday, April 2, we did so! Many parishioners from both parishes came together to make their welcome official, showering them with many of the things that they were lacking, especially for setting up a new kitchen, their new bedrooms, and even toys for the girls. We were able to keep the shower a secret even from Father Ihor, although having them come back up to Danbury from White Plains for the afternoon proved quite a trick, but we hope that we made their transition to the US a little bit easier, and that they know they are not alone as they get used to their new life.

Please pray for Father Ihor, the other new priests who have arrived, and especially their families, as they join our eparchial family of Passaic, and may God grant them many happy years!



GCU and Byzantine Family Day!

Sunday
May 15, 2016
12 noon - 7 p.m.

Ride-All-Day Passes
48" or taller \$27.00
under 48" \$19.00
Catered Lunch \$9.00
(ages 4 & under free)

Knoebels

Deadline to order tickets: May 2, 2016
More info at gcuusa.com!



SAINTS CYRIL AND METHODIUS PARISH CELEBRATES 25TH ANNIVERSARY

Cary, NC

Photography by Jacquelynn Buck

The parish family of Saints Cyril and Methodius Byzantine Catholic Church, Cary, NC, under the guidance of current pastor, Father Richard Rohrer (1994-present) celebrated 25 years of being together. Bishop Kurt made the journey from New Jersey to celebrate this milestone on the weekend of Thomas Sunday, April 2 and 3, 2016.

The celebration started Saturday afternoon, April 2nd, with a re-dedication of the Right to Life Monument and Project Rachel Memorial Garden on the grounds of the church. The service was led by Bishop Kurt, accompanied by Father Rick, and assisted by Father Mark Shuey of the Saint Nicholas Ukrainian Catholic Mission Parish. The Knights of Columbus, who sponsored the erection of the memorial, were also present. During the closing, Father Rick said that in this Year of Mercy, there is comfort to the parents who have buried letters in the Memorial Garden, to the souls of 600 little ones, who, like young shoots cut off before they could bloom, are planted by Christ in paradise. Afterwards, Project Rachel and Birthchoice hosted a Tea and Pascha Pastries reception. Vespers for Saint Thomas Sunday

was celebrated by Father Rick, parishioners and visitors, and presided over by Bishop Kurt. A traditional Eastern European dinner, music and dancing at the Fallon Center in Raleigh, capped off Saturday's celebrations.

On Saint Thomas Sunday, in a joint celebration, the parishes of Saints Cyril and Methodius and Saint Nicholas Ukrainian Catholic Mission, welcomed Bishop Kurt for the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy. Bishop Kurt, along with Concelebrants Father Rick and Father Mark and Deacons David Thomas and Joseph Kibbe, led the service. During Bishop Kurt's homily, he recited the Paschal Homily of Saint John Chrysostom and spoke of the

importance of knowing the early church in the Acts of the Apostles. He also spoke about Jesus' life being the best-documented event in the world, even more than any other "historical" event. He concluded by telling the parishioners how blessed they are to believe even though they weren't able to see or touch what Saint Thomas did when he encountered Jesus so many years ago. At the service's end, Bishop Kurt distributed copies of the Novena to Saint Theresa and asked the parishioners to pray for priestly vocations. He also distributed medals from his recent trip to Rome, which were blessed by Pope Francis. Father Rick thanked Bishop Kurt and thanked the parish for being a

loving family to each other. After the service, the celebration continued outdoors with *cascarones* (confetti eggs) showering participants. After a blessing by Bishop Kurt, everyone enjoyed feasting on Southern favorites and Mexican dishes, traditional sides, and delicious desserts, while being entertained by a Mariachi band. Following the agape meal, Bishop Kurt presided over the Divine Liturgy in Spanish, celebrated by Father Rick.

The following day, Monday, April 4th, parishioner Dan Pope accompanied Bishop Kurt to view the Eparchial Farm in Clarksville, VA

Photography for the event was graciously provided by Jacquelynn Buck, a former parishioner now residing in Arizona.



POPE NAMES PAPAL NUNCIO TO MEXICO TO BE NEW NUNCIO TO THE UNITED STATES

Continued from page 1

of Saint-Pierre-Saint-Paul de Colombes in the Diocese of Nanterre, France, from 1970 to 1973.

He then earned a diploma at the Pontifical Ecclesiastical Academy in Rome, which provides training to priests for eventual service in the Vatican's diplomatic corps. In 1977, he entered diplomatic service, with his first post in Wellington, New Zealand. He then served in Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Cuba, Brazil and at the Permanent Observer Mission

of the Holy See to the United Nations in Geneva.

In July 1995, Saint John Paul II named him an archbishop and appointed him as apostolic nuncio to Haiti. He served there until 1999, and then was named nuncio to Uganda, where he stayed until 2007, when he was named nuncio to Mexico.

Washington Cardinal Donald W. Wuerl said in a statement that

he looked forward to welcoming Archbishop Pierre to the archdiocese "where he will make his home as he carries out his responsibilities across the country." The apostolic nunciature is located in the nation's capital.

"Archbishop Pierre is recognized for his distinguished diplomatic career and service to the church," said the cardinal, who also expressed gratitude for Archbishop Viganò's service.

"As he departs Washington and concludes his service to the Church, I offer my gratitude for his many kindnesses as we worked together, particularly in anticipation of the visit of Pope Francis to the United States last September," Cardinal Wuerl said. "Archbishop Viganò carries with him our heartfelt prayers and best wishes."



*You're invited to the
Sixteenth Annual*

Saints Cyril & Methodius Lecture

sponsored by the Byzantine Catholic Seminary of Ss. Cyril and Methodius; Pittsburgh, PA
Hosted by Saint John Byzantine Catholic Cathedral

Our Guest Speaker: Very Rev. Fr. M. Daniel Findikyan

TOPIC: *The Mystery Hidden for Ages: An Eastern, Ecumenical Sacramental Theology*

The sacramental synthesis that emerged from scholastic theology in second-millennium Europe represented a turning point in the way the Roman Catholic Church understood its sacramental life. To varying degrees and by diverse pathways the neo-scholastic framework eventually influenced and even shaped the sacramental theology of virtually every Eastern Church, Catholic and Orthodox. Yet ironically, scholastic sacramental theology conflicts sharply with what these churches' native liturgical rites themselves betray about the sacraments. Our lecturer will address how a careful reading of the sacramental prayers of the various eastern rites reveals the seeds of a common and unmistakable pre-scholastic sacramental theology that is ancient, Biblical, distinctively "eastern," and consequently of ecumenical significance.

Very Rev. Fr. (Michael) Daniel Findikyan, a native of Fort Worth, Texas, is Professor of Liturgical Studies at St. Nersess Armenian Seminary in New Rochelle, New York, and Director of the Krikor and Clara Zohrab Information Center of the Diocese of the Armenian Church (Eastern), New York. Fr. Daniel earned his doctorate in Liturgical Studies from the Pontifical Oriental Institute in Rome, where he studied under Robert Taft, SJ. He also earned a Master's degree in musicology from the City University of New York.

Fr. Daniel has published numerous articles in scholarly journals and books, and served as the general editor of the Divine Liturgy book that is used throughout the Eastern Diocese of the Armenian Church of America. His latest book is entitled, *Frequently-Asked Questions on the Badarak: The Divine Liturgy of the Armenian Church*.

Fr. Daniel serves as recurring Visiting Professor of Theology at the University of Notre Dame (South Bend, Indiana), and has lectured throughout the United States, as well as in Armenia, Greece, Italy, Lebanon, Sweden, Slovakia and Russia. He is Vice President of the Society of Oriental Liturgy and a member of the North American Academy of Liturgy.



When

Wednesday, May 11, 2016

Lecture at 7:00 pm
Reception to follow

Where

St. John Cathedral Center

210 Greentree Road
Munhall, PA 15120

This event is FREE but due to space limitations registration is required by April 29th. Please register on-line at www.bcs.edu, complete the form below, call 412-321-8383 or email office@bcs.edu.

Complete and return registration to address below by April 29, 2016

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

Eparchy/Diocese (if applicable) _____

E-mail _____

Byzantine Catholic Seminary
3605 Perrysville Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15214



Migrants from the war-torn Middle East

TOGETHER ON THE MARGINS

Lesbos trip to be ecumenical sign of service

Continued from page 1

Church has a long history of being socially involved, particularly through its schools, universities and hospitals, going into the world to serve others. Generally speaking, he added, in Eastern churches the focus is on monasteries, where people would come for spiritual solace. The monks did not go out to them.

And ecumenically, “any step like this that religious leaders can do together breaks down walls,” he said.

Patriarch Bartholomew, who studied at the Oriental Institute, “is very courageous” in risking criticism for going to Lesbos with the head of the Roman Catholic Church as well as for making such an obvious social intervention, Father Nazar said.

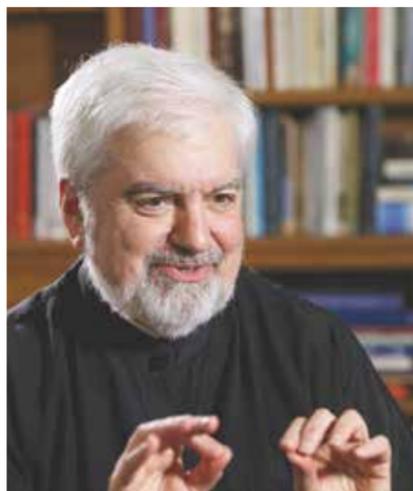
The pope and patriarch meeting “in a pastoral mode” communicates an important message to a specific sector of Orthodoxy -- “those who want to step out pastorally and be more engaged with everything that is happening in the hearts and minds of people in the modern world,” he said.

The Jesuit said it is interesting that the Lesbos trip is taking place two months before leaders of all the world’s Orthodox churches are set

to hold their first council meeting in centuries and one of the topics is “what is the mission of Orthodoxy in the world.”

The “Great and Holy Council of the Orthodox Church,” commonly referred to as the pan-Orthodox council, is scheduled for June 16-27 in Crete. Preparations for the meeting have been going on for decades.

Jack Figel, the U.S.-based chairman of the *Oriente Lumen* conferences and foundation, said Saint John Paul’s visit to Greece and, especially, his public apology for the historical wrongs done to Orthodox Christians, opened doors and “created a much warmer relationship



Lector Jack Figel of the Eparchy of Passaic

between the Orthodox Church of Greece and the Catholic Church.”

Going to Greece with Patriarch Bartholomew gives Pope Francis’ visit “a long-term ecumenical dimension,” showing how the Orthodox Church and the Catholic Church globally can and do work together for the good of society, said Figel, a Ruthenian Catholic long involved in Catholic-Orthodox relations.

While some Greek Orthodox likely are “not happy” with the visit, Figel said, “they are not being so vocal.” Archbishop Ieronymos II of Athens and the synod of the Orthodox Church of Greece invited Pope Francis, which could be seen as an indication that their faithful are ready for progress in building Christian unity and providing a united Christian witness in service.

In addition, Pope Francis’ personality, gestures and particularly the way he constantly refers to himself as “bishop of Rome” -- not as pope -- is “pleasant for the Orthodox to hear,” he said. While in official theological discussions, the Orthodox have recognized in theory the value of a universal primate for the Christian church, they still have serious reservations about how the tradi-

tional ministry of the pope has been exercised.

The joint visit of Pope Francis and Patriarch Bartholomew also may have an impact -- at least in the perception of Orthodox faithful around the world -- on the pan-Orthodox council, Figel said.

The Russian Orthodox Church is the largest of the Orthodox churches, and Pope Francis met its head, Patriarch Kirill of Moscow, in Cuba in February. Meeting the ecumenical patriarch now, Figel said, reaffirms Pope Francis’ recognition of Patriarch Bartholomew’s spiritual leadership among the Orthodox as well as “elevating in the world’s mind” the role of the ecumenical patriarch.

“My guess is that Pope Francis is a brilliant tactician and strategist,” Figel said. “It may have been an inspiration of the Holy Spirit -- I hope it has been -- but it certainly seems to me as an outsider that there is a connection between Havana, Lesbos and the Great Council.”

ARTICLE SUBMISSION REQUEST

Does your parish have Feast Day events, fundraisers, community service projects, special liturgical services, or any other type of happening? Speak with your pastor and become your parish media liaison!

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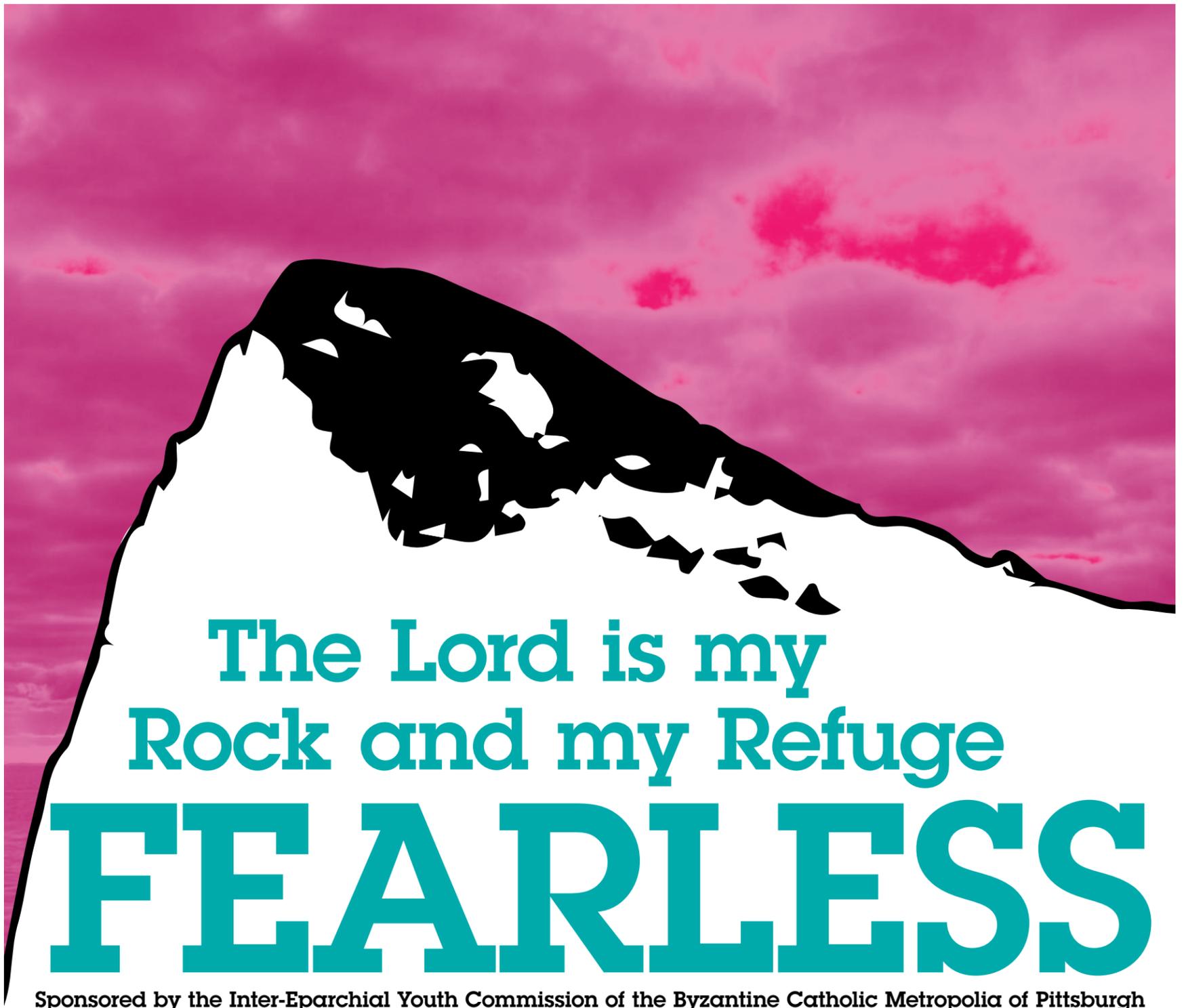
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- Key people present in photographs
- Photographs preferred at a resolution of-

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FAITH AND COMMUNITY ISSUES

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

MINISTERING TO PEOPLE OF A HOMOSEXUAL ORIENTATION

Introduction: How and Why of this series

This series of articles is presented in response to request from a reader to present a study of homosexuality and the Church's response to this most sensitive issue. The information are documents taken from Church Sources, namely: The document *Personae Humanae* (PH), from the Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith, promulgated December 29, 1975; *The Catechism of the Catholic Church* (CCC), English trans. © 1994 United States Catholic Conference, Inc.—Libreria Editrice Vaticana; *Always Our Children* (AOC): A Pastoral Message to Parents of Homosexual Children and Suggestions for Pastoral Ministers; A Statement of the Bishops' Committee on Marriage and Family, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops © 1997; *Ministry to Persons with a Homosexual Inclination* (MPHI): *Guidelines for Pastoral Care*, Issued by USCCB November 14, 2006, ©2006 United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. This study strives to be comprehensive but is by no means exhaustive. It is recommended that interested parties use this as a jumping off point to further research this topic. The goal is to present a merciful and caring, pastoral approach toward people of homosexual orientation and their family members who struggle with this issue.

The admission/discovery of homosexuality in a family member/friend

The time for total truth has arrived. Your loved one has admitted to having a same-sex attraction. It could be a son, daughter, relative, or friend, in some cases even a spouse. The effect of the "announcement" is stunning. Questions flood the mind; emotions begin to cascade and run the gamut from shock to rage to self-blame to finding fault with the announcer. The feeling of being overwhelmed begins to take hold. Confusion and chaos reign. How do I respond? What do I say? How could this happen? What did I (we) do wrong? Endless combinations of questions, situations, connections, all run amok. Where do I begin? . . .

Humanity as Person with Inherent Dignity

Human dignity is the starting point from which all understanding of what it is to be human is derived. What is Human dignity, from where does it come? Does it really exist? Are we really any different from the other animal life forms around us? If we are different, how are we and what makes us so? What responsibilities are included with this dignity? If we choose religion as our perspective in answering these questions a good place to begin is with the Sacred Scriptures themselves. In Divine Revelation we are given some very clear indications of what defines us as human persons and what the dignity of that state entails. Beginning at the beginning quite literally, the Book of Genesis in the first chapter offers a profound insight into who we are, especially in light of God's plan of creation:

"Then God said: 'Let Us make man in Our image, after Our likeness. Let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, and the cattle, and over all the wild animals and all the creatures that crawl on the ground.' God created man in His image; in the divine image He created him; male and female He created them. . . . God looked at everything He had made, and He found it very good. Evening came, and morning followed—the sixth day" (NAB Gen.1: 25-27, 31).

Our dignity, our identity, according to the Book of Genesis, is rooted in God's likeness. Male and Female in His Image and Likeness, the crown of all creation were we made. So much so, that after creating mankind, God found His Creation not just good, but very good. The singular point that is presented is the fundamental, inherent dignity every human being possesses in their being created by an All-Loving God. All people are called to love mirroring the Trinitarian intimacy of Father, Son and Holy Spirit's eternal outpouring of One to Another (PH, AOC, MPHI, CCC).

Inherent in being human is the potential ability to relate to other beings. God is relational in the Trinity, and God's design in creation was to create

one who had the ability to be in relationship with another and so reflect the very Nature of God in a created form (Gn 1:25ff). This creation is a creature with whom God can freely have a relationship and in love freely share the intimacy of the Trinity which is eternal life (MPHI). Such a loving gift and act on the part of the Supreme Being renders to the human creature a dignity that is ineffable, inestimable and finds its supreme fulfillment in the Beatific Vision; enjoying the bliss of being in the Divine Presence, in direct communication i.e. the Divine Beatitude (CCC, 1994, p.424 §1700). Recognition of this reality is *sine qua non* and as such demands respect.

The Homosexual and Inherent Dignity

The Divine Commission to make man in God's Image and Likeness carried no limitations or conditions; all human beings fall under this directive - no exceptions. The document from the Bishops of the US (MPHI) makes it very clear that the consistent teaching of the Catholic Church is that persons who identify themselves as homosexually oriented "Must be accepted with respect, compassion, and sensitivity" (CCC, no. 2358 as cited in MPHI).

Because of this, there can never be any reason to excuse or allow scorn, hate, violence, or any kind of degradation be directed toward the homosexually-oriented individual, male or female. The Bishops' document makes it explicit using terms such as "deplorable" and that such conduct "deserves condemnation from the Church's pastors wherever it occurs" (MPHI p. 2 as cited from PH). There is even encouragement in strong terms for the Church pastors to examine their own motives and when needed take whatever steps necessary to "grow in holiness" in their witness to Christ's Truth (MPHI, p.2).

The next installment will begin to look at the role of sexuality in God's relational plan for all of us and the challenge homosexuality presents to that plan. **ECL**



SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES

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

SEEING VISIONS. SEEING DREAMS.

Speaking to the curious crowd that gathered when the Holy Spirit descended upon the original Church gathered in the Upper Room in Jerusalem, Saint Peter (Acts 2:14) quoted the prophecy of Joel (2:28): "I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh. . . . Your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions."

Pentecost is the moment when God kept that promise and fulfilled that prophecy.

To our ears, that may sound backwards. Old people doze off, dreaming about the past. We expect our children to have dreams about their future. But what kind of dreams do we encourage our children to dream? Does it go beyond "You can be whatever you want to be; you can achieve whatever you want to achieve"? Is it any deeper than "You're special because you're you"? Such pep talks are circular and ultimately empty. Sooner or later, even presuming we try our best

all day every day, we hit our limits: the limits of our talents, the limits of our inclinations, the limits of our imagination, the limits of our energy.

But if those dreams are empowered by the Holy Spirit, if those dreams partake of God's wider viewpoint, if those dreams go beyond whims and fashions and a focus on me, then there are no limits to what our children can dream and achieve because they will be inspired by the ultimate



Icon of Pentecost

Good, the ultimate Truth, the ultimate Beauty. They will be empowered by a God who can say forever and mean it.

When we hear the Holy Spirit inviting us older folks to dream dreams and see visions, our first impulse might be to say, “Great, but first let me find my bifocals.” The older we get, the more we’re tempted in two directions. We think we’ve seen it all and we think that what we see is just getting worse and worse. But the Holy Spirit wants to empower us to see visions—to be surprised, to see how God’s plan is unfolding all around us and to see how we can contribute to making it happen.

Once again, the first thing the Spirit needs to teach us is how to look beyond ourselves, not to focus on what we can’t do anymore but to discover what we can do—maybe for the first time—maybe better than ever before. The same forces that feed our children empty, selfish dreams want us adults to judge ourselves by impossible superficial standards of beauty, of usefulness, of power that are guaranteed to leave us feeling like failures (and likely to buy expensive “solutions” to our problems).

Instead of those phony values and empty goals, the Holy Spirit offers us gifts that help us grow up and gifts that grow better with age: wisdom,

understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, reverence and respect for God. (Isaiah 11: 1-3). And when we accept that gift of the Holy Spirit the results are obvious—love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. (Galatians 5:22-23) Those are the kind of superpowers a real superhero needs. Those are the gifts that make spouses, good parents, good children, good students, good athletes, good artists, good people and eventually, saints. The power comes from the Holy Spirit; but the choice to accept those gifts is ours.

Those gifts can help our children dream bigger, better, more generous, more valuable dreams. Those gifts can lead us out of whatever narrow views we’ve let adulthood squeeze us into. The Spirit has been given. The Spirit inspires the Scriptures, empowers the sacraments, enables our prayer and moves in the Church. Do we dare dream God’s dreams for us? Do we dare see God’s vision for who we are and who we can be by His grace? **ECL**



LIFE, LOVE, AND THE HUMAN PERSON

By Ann M. Koshute, MTS

BLESSED ARE THE BARREN; THEY SHALL BEAR FRUIT

May is the month of Mother’s Day - our chance to honor the women to whom we owe our lives. For cynics, it’s a “manufactured holiday.” While it may be a bit of that, it’s really an authentic reminder that we come from another - ultimately from God - which should engender in us humility and gratitude. Whether you’re sentimental, cynical, or somewhere in between, one view of Mother’s Day goes mostly unnoticed: that of the woman who wants a child but is not (and may never be) a mother. In the United States alone one in eight couples experience infertility. They’re among our families and neighbors. We see them every Sunday, surrounded by families large and small, widows and widowers, single people and teenagers. They’re part of the fabric of the Church, participants in the Holy Mysteries like everyone else. But on Mother’s Day they stick out like sore thumbs - or, at least that’s the way they feel.

I don’t want to overstate things, as if Mother’s Day sends these couples into inconsolable depression. Yet we may not realize that it can remind them what’s missing in their marriage. They might wonder if people are thinking, “What’s wrong with them? Are they selfish, cheap, contracepting?” Friends and strangers alike (unbelievable as it sounds) actually ask them what - or who - is “the problem.” They feel like outsiders, even in their relationship with God: “Why us, Lord?”

Children are blessings, and couples who can’t conceive experience a real lack of something meant to be part of marriage. The reasons why a couple cannot conceive vary, a mystery ultimately resting in God’s heart. Infertility is a burden, but also a path to fruitfulness in its own way. God alone is the “Creator and Giver of life,” generous-

ly sharing His creative power with us. That children are a gift cannot be overstated. No couple can claim the right to a child as something owed to them. Children aren’t property or commodities to be bought, sold or created in a laboratory. The child is a gift, a task, a responsibility - often a challenge - but always God’s blessing to be embraced with gratitude.

Couples struggling with infertility may feel “less than blessed” by God, but this is a lie of the devil. The truth is that childless couples don’t know any less about love or the meaning of family; they just know it differently. For the couple facing infertility, the shape love takes is cruciform, and their sacrificial suffering is not borne alone. Jesus is intimately engaged in it with them. The wound of infertility isn’t inflicted on them, but deeply felt in Christ’s own wounded but glorified flesh. Infertility is neither punishment nor cosmic affirmation of one’s inability (or unworthiness) to parent. The “why” of infertility (beyond, and even in spite of, medical diagnoses) is a mystery, unsolvable this side of heaven. That’s little comfort to those impacted by it, but it makes space for hope. When the couple surrenders their lives, their marriage and their fertility to Christ, buries their suffering in His wounds, they’re open to the possibility of a creative partnership with Him that is different, but no less a gift. Every marriage is called to a fruitfulness that reaches beyond the couple - into their extended family, community, and the Church. Fruitfulness is not only enfolded in the child, but also in generosity, hospitality, kindness, and a million great and small gestures of unselfish love.

Ours is the God of miracles, as our Faith reminds us. For couples burdened with infertility God’s miracles are harder to discern, but they’re

no less real. Marriage, especially in today’s world, is itself a miracle, and it doesn’t exist apart from the community of the Church. Couples without children, like all couples, need the support and prayers of their parish families. Such support is essential, but must be offered in love, and with care. We may be tempted to give advice to a couple, and it may be great! But “advice” is best offered in relationship. Infertility is emotional, stressful and sad, and it makes couples wonder what they did “wrong.” “Didn’t we pray hard enough, long enough, or to the ‘right saint’? Should we have tried this diet or that hormone?” The questions are endless, and adding more might not be helpful. We’re not speaking about “bodies that don’t work,” or one “technique” over another. Infertility impacts living, loving and suffering human persons. The greatest help one can give to these couples is prayer, love, and to accompany them in friendship.

Infertility is a complex subject, particularly sensitive to those suffering with it, and can’t be fully explored in a short column. What’s clear, though, is that it’s not the end of the world - or of marriage! When a couple places this wound in the wounds of Christ it neither disappears nor festers, but gives birth to something new and beautiful; a gift that only that couple, in creative partnership with God, can bring into the world.

*Dr. Thomas Hilgers is at the cutting edge of diagnosing and treating infertility. He also treats reproductive issues like painful periods, irregular cycles, etc. without use of the birth control pill. The “Pill” is not only toxic to the body, but only addresses symptoms while masking the underlying problem. Learn more about treating infertility and other reproductive issues at <http://www.popepaulvi.com/> **ECL**



UNDERSTANDING ICONS

Father Joseph Bertha, Ph.D.

THREE ICONS OF CHRIST

Works of Mercy: Clothing the Naked in the Icons of Christ

Installment 8 of 12



Amidst the hustle and bustle of our spring cleaning, sorting and donating our clothing to the poor, we may wonder what other meanings lie behind this work of mercy. Certainly, it is important to donate clothing for the community members around us, particularly warm items during the winter months such as coats, sweaters, gloves and hats.

But don't the works of mercy mean something spiritual as well? When you do a bible concordance word check on clothing, or naked, an interesting array of quotations comes through. In Matthew 22, we read about the inappropriate wedding garment of the guest who is eventually rejected and cast out. In Mark 1:6, we read about John the Baptist clad in camel's hair, the wardrobe of penitence. In Luke 27: 8, we read about the Gerasene demoniac who did not put on any clothes, and of course our first parents Adam and Eve who were not clothed at all.

The most poignant and compelling Scripture quotations of clothing/nakedness deal with the sacrament of Baptism. Particularly when we examine the baptismal verse chanted in the Divine Liturgy from

Saint Paul's Letter to the Galatians 3:27: "All you who have been baptized into Christ, have been clothed with Christ," we sing about outward and spiritual clothing.

Mercy visualized In the clothing of Our Savior

We have to focus specifically on the garments in which Our Lord is clothed, since He is the perfect icon of God the Father's Mercy! Our Lord typically in icons wears two garments, the himation, the outer cloak, and the undergarment called the chiton or tunic. There is only a limited color options in His depictions. Typically, the himation is shown in the deep purplish blue color redolent of the royal robes of the Byzantine Imperial family. His chiton is usually shown in fiery crimson redolent of blood, or even the heavenly fire.

Most importantly, these colors harken back to the command of God to Moses in the choice for the priestly garments of Aaron, confer Exodus 39:1-3, not only the colors are declared by God to be purplish blue, scarlet, and white, but there are to be highlights of woven gold sewn or embroidered into the weave of the linen cloth.

Both of these garments, most especially the outer himation is imbued and suffused with a series of unending lines undulating seemingly without beginning or end. They suggest a river coursing through the landscape, especially visible from an airplane window. Ultimately, they suggest the never ending courses of mercy which God exhibits towards His creation.

Chrysography, writing in gold from the command of God

Sometimes these unending lines are filled with gold, they refulge with light, particularly when they are made in the medium of mosaics. The tiny stones shimmer like fire in the variations of light hitting them, vivifying the figures.

Paradoxically, as Christ is stripped of His garments at His crucifixion, the fabric of His flesh displays the Great Mercy of God as He is depicted in the icon of His repose on the cross. Traced in His concave innards a cross can be seen, grounded directly on His navel. This artistic feature visualizes the visceral depth of His compassion and mercy, down to His very bowels from the Greek word *splachna*.

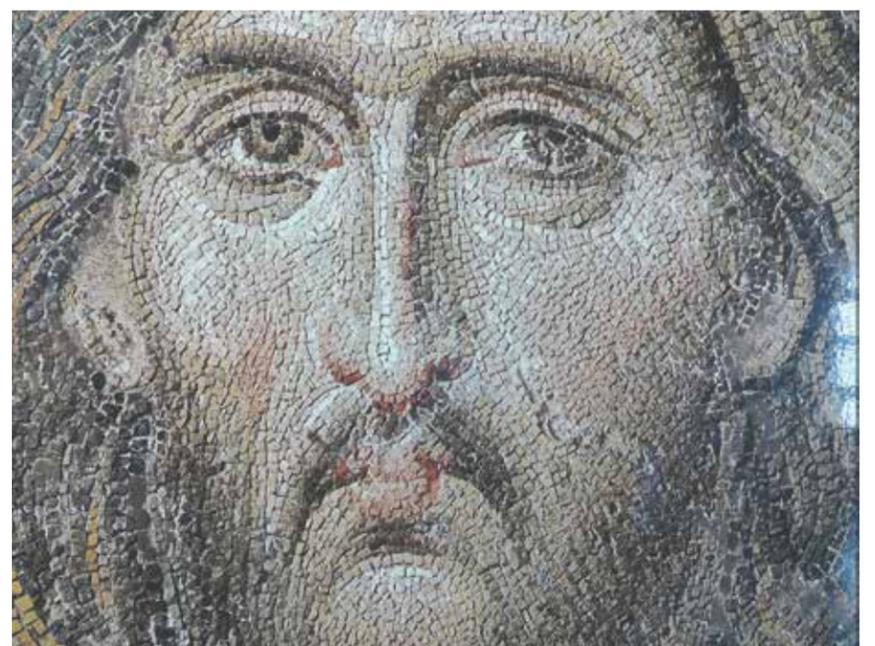
Hades is left stripped naked and not exhibiting any Christ like virtues in the icon of the Resurrection. In Ode 8 of the Sunday of the Paralytic we sing: "Hades was stripped when it saw your descent into its depths." In this interesting juxtaposition Hades who is stripped naked and left effete without virtue in the underworld during his encounter with the Risen High Priest Jesus

Christ. Our Blessed Savior is clad radiantly in the refulgent linen garments of light.

Exhibit mercy from your innermost viscera!

What exactly then are the clothing we are to be clad in as Christian believers? We are to be clad with the garments that Jesus Christ wears visualized in His icons. Saint Paul not only describes these garments but exhorts us in Colossians 3:12: "Put on the clothing or attire of the elect of God, holy and beloved, mercy from the depths of your bowels, compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience."

As we sort through our clothing, we need to display the following virtues; mercy from our deepest innards, not hatred towards others; compassion for others, not contempt; kindness and not words of bitterness or cynicism; humility in serving others and not boasting arrogantly of our greatness; gentleness, being tender with people and not rough or rugged-mouthed judges; and filled with patience, waiting eagerly for the conversion of sinners, instead of impatiently condemning others for their perceived misdeeds. In this manner we exhibit the icon of Christ not only in our flesh but in the clothing and garments we wear in this world! **ECL**



CATECHETICAL REFLECTIONS

Father Robert F. Slesinski, Ph.D.



OMG: A SHOUT IN THE STREET?

The Marvel of the Mind: Modes of Cognition Installment 12

In the search for truth, which ultimately, spiritually speaking, is a seeking or reaching out for God, the Augustinian distinction between the inward and outward man is one of critical import. They are distinguishable by how each approaches reality, marked by the predominant type of vision at work in life. One is absorbed in corporeal vision; the other is governed by intellectual or spiritual vision. Respectively these divergent visions correspond to the two modes of cognition, the first, *sense perception*, the second, *intellectual cognition*.

As the tag “outward man” indicates, this person is engrossed, even limited by, sense perception that focuses on objects “from without.” As such, the “outward man” is governed by the philosophical stance of *empiricism*, which, indeed, maintains that all knowledge comes primarily, if not uniquely, from sense perceptions, sensory experience being the defining moment in human cognition. Empirical knowledge is thereby rendered the paradigm for human cognition. Often specified as *British empiricism* after its chief exponents—all British—the Englishman John Locke (1632–1704), the Irish Anglican bishop George Berkeley (1685–1753), and the Scot David Hume (1711–1776), these philosophers, who, sadly to say, set the groundwork for the subsequent impoverished sense of philosophy in the English-speaking world, are best known for their classic formulations of the fundamental theses of empiricism.

In the instance of Locke, we find him holding that the mind is nothing but a *tabula rasa* or “blank tablet” on which experiences derived from sense impressions are written. There are, according to

him, two sources of our ideas, primarily sensations, then, derivatively reflection on these sensations. For his part, Berkeley is most remembered for his thesis *esse est percipi* (“to be is to be perceived”), ineluctably reducing all material things to ideas, thus giving rise to “subjective idealism,” rendering the individual knower the determinant of reality, and not reality itself. Hume, in his empiricist understanding of reality, founds knowledge on sense impressions and ideas, which, for their part, are little more than faded impressions embedded in our minds. Expounding upon this empiricist conception of cognition, he holds that sense knowledge is based on inductive reasoning through which there is no certainty that the future will resemble the past. All knowledge, in this way, is merely based on the sum of accumulated experiences, giving rise to an eviscerated sense of causality—there being no inner linkage *in being*—that is reduced to the notion of blunt “constant conjunction,” obviously affirmed not “from within,” but only “from without.” In regard to a “personal self,” it enjoys no “substantiality” (a meaningless word for Hume), but is nothing more than a “bundle of sensations.”

Oddly enough, Saint Augustine, in his very spiritual understanding of reality, proffers a more convincing and compelling justification of sense perception, truly linking it to the soul “from within.” As he argues in his *Confessions* (X, VII, 11),

I will soar beyond that power of mine [the soul] by which I am united to the body, and by which the whole structure of it is filled with life,

further describing the power of the soul in terms of that

by which I endow my flesh with sense... commanding that the eye is not to hear and the ear is not to see, but that I am to see by the eye and to hear by the ear; and giving to each of the other senses its own proper place and function, through the diversity of which *I, the single mind, act* (emphasis added).

What Augustine is arguing for here is the primacy of the “I” or self over the bodily senses themselves. It is clear to him that man’s five bodily sense of sight, hearing, touch, smell, and taste involve bodily organs, which enable us to perceive physical objects exterior to us. But these bodily sense, for their part in turn, do not act in and by themselves, but necessarily presuppose an interior sense, which makes sense, as it were, of our bodily perceptions. Conceived in this way, the interior sense is nothing but an actualization of the human soul as a performing subject, acting as a unifying center that sorts through and gives meaning to the differing contributions of the bodily senses. Most importantly, what we see at work here is the inner sense as an act of the whole man that can never be confined to any one part of the body, for instance, the brain, but is suffused throughout all the five locally distinct senses.

Thus stated, could it possibly be that the more ancient conception of Saint Augustine is a far more cogent explanation of cognition than the early modern views of the British empiricists? OMG! Are we not on firm ground as spiritual beings to reject all materialist reductions of human cognition? (to be continued) **ECL**



CENTENARY OF THE FALLING ASLEEP OF BISHOP SOTER ORTYNSKY, OSBM

First Greek Catholic Bishop in the USA

1916-2016

Born: January 29, 1866, in Ortynychy, Sambir County, Galicia, Austro-Hungarian Empire (now Lviv Oblast, Ukraine)

Vows as a Basilian monk: January 1, 1889

Appointed Bishop for Greek Catholics in America and titular bishop of Daulia: March 26, 1907

Ordained bishop by Metropolitan Andrey Sheptytsky: May 12, 1907

Bishop Ortynsky named Exarch by the Apostolic See, granting him full ordinary jurisdiction: May 28, 1913

Bishop Ortynsky contracted pneumonia and died in Philadelphia: March 24, 1916 Funeral attended by an estimated 10,000-15,000 people

Vičnaja jemu pamjat'! May his memory be eternal!



Icon of Jesus and Zacchaeus

As April 15 approaches so does the deadline for most of us to submit our Income Tax with the Internal Revenue Service. “Death and Taxes are perhaps the only certainties in this life” according to an old adage. Jesus Himself did not shirk this obligation. Saint Matthew in his Gospel (17:24-27) provides this account: “When they came to Capernaum, the collectors of the half-shekel tax went up to Peter and said, “Does not your teacher pay the tax?” He said, “Yes.” And when Peter came home, Jesus spoke to him first, saying, “What do you think, Simon? From whom do kings of the earth take toll or tribute, from their sons or from others? And when he had said, “From others,” Jesus said to him, “Then the sons are free. However, not to give offense to them, go to the sea and cast a hook, and take the first fish that comes up, and when you open its mouth you will find a shekel; take that and give it to them for Me and for yourself.”

SEASONAL REFLECTIONS

Monsignor John. T. Sekellick, JCL



TAXES

As part of everyday living, having to pay taxes for most people in the time of our Lord, and now, was an inescapable obligation. The annual payment of the half-shekel to the Temple was collected by officials who traveled throughout Palestine. The Jewish puppet kings then also levied taxes as did Rome. Censuses were taken to determine the number of people to be taxed as happened during the reign of Caesar Augustus at the time of our Lord's holy birth (Luke 2:1-5). The payment of taxes to the emperor was an enormous affront among the Chosen People and understandably evoked protests and led to rebellion.

Jesus was questioned by the Pharisees and some of the Herodians on the lawfulness of paying taxes, to which He made a remarkable reply: “Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's and to God the things that are God's” (Mark 12:14) Among the twelve chosen Apostles was Matthew, a tax collector, certainly held in quite low regard by his own people for obvious reasons (Matthew 9:9). Saint Paul likewise advised that taxes and revenues be paid to the state without fail (Romans 13:6-7).

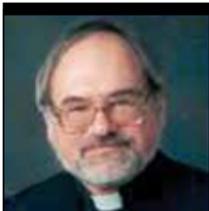
In more ancient times, a 20% tax was exacted from all Egypt during its seven years of plenty, most of which was grain which was stored. This spared Egypt the worst consequences of her seven years of leanness and became a source of supply for other countries during the famine. King David amassed an enormous fortune principally because of war and tribute. Under King

Solomon, Israelites had to do compulsory labor in building the Temple.

Under Persian subjugation, however, there were some exemptions allowed for all priests, Levites, singers, porters, and some other servants in the Temple. At the time of Julius Caesar, taxes in general were somewhat reduced. Herod the Great introduced a sales tax, and the system of auctioning off the office of tax collector was introduced. Collecting taxes was immensely profitable for the highest bidder.

The willingness of Jesus to eat and associate with tax collectors and other unsavory offenders against morality does not mean that He tolerated or condoned their life-style; rather, He displayed this compassion in the hope of bringing them to reform their lives. Matthew-Levi immediately gave up his post to become a disciple. The rich Zacchaeus undertook to restore fourfold whatever he had taken by fraud. Even the stern rabbis also considered the possibility that tax collectors could repent.

Taxes in their own way do serve some helpful purpose in providing social and material needs such as domestic infrastructures, economic assistance to the less fortunate, educational resources, medical research, and government services in general. With such a perspective, may we take to heart those words of our Lord, “Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's and to God, the things that are God's.” **ECL**



THE BYZANTINE LITURGY

By Archpriest David Petras, SEOD

THE PRESENCE OF GOD

The Russian Orthodox faithful often greet one another, “Glory to God!” (Slava Bogu). In many Christian traditions, the presence of God is proclaimed in our greetings and our farewells. It is that God is “present everywhere and fills all thing.” He is the beginning and the end and everything we say and do is in his presence. Catholics of the Byzantine tradition usually greet one another, “Glory to Jesus Christ!” Our Lord is the incarnation of God, who walked in our midst and who is still present with us. When the kiss of peace is given in the Divine Liturgy, our salutation is, “Christ is among us,” to which we respond, “He is and will be. (Technically, we could more literally say, “He both is and he will be.”) Here we profess what our Lord told us in the Gospel, “For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them. (Matthew 18:20)” Christ is with us always, as he promised at his ascension (Matthew 28:20) and in each and every one of us (Matthew 25:40). The Eastern Catholic greeting is possibly a translation of the Latin, “Laudetur Jesus Christus,” “Praised be Jesus Christ.” The Byzantine tradition always emphasizes the glory

of God, which fills the world, as the poet Gerard Manley Hopkins wrote, “The world is charged with the grandeur of God.” The short prayer also affirms this reality, “To the greater glory of God,” (Latin, “Ad majorem gloriam Dei”) Indeed, God is found in many of the world's greeting, “Adieu,” (French) “Adios” (Spanish), “Goodbye,” (English, “God be with you.”

Who, indeed, is God? There is a contemporary movement called the “new atheism,” which has influenced many people. This movement, however, gets its strength from the concepts we have of God. While we witness that “God is present everywhere and fills all things,” sometimes the picture we form of him is inadequate. The Pseudo-Dionysius, a Syrian theologian of the sixth century, warns us of this danger, “...we must not dare to resort to words or conceptions concerning that hidden divinity which transcends being, apart from what the sacred scriptures have divinely revealed. Since the unknowing of what is beyond being is something above and beyond speech, mind, or being itself, one should ascribe to it understanding beyond being. (The Divine Names 1,1)” St. Paul preached to the Athenians

in Greece about God, “it is he who gives to everyone life and breath and everything...For ‘In him we live and move and have our being,’ (Acts 17:25,28)” We are not comfortable with the unseeable nature of God, and so we try to form concepts of him, the “hidden divinity which transcends being,” and these usually picture God as another being among beings, instead of that which is above all beings, and gives existence to all that is by his creative power. Thus we have a jumble: rocks, trees, animals, God, birds, fish, human beings, baseball, oranges, while the reality is that we have all these things and life itself because God calls them into being and sustains their existence. God is the reality of that which is.

We see these false concepts in our media. God is usually represented as an old man dwelling in the clouds, looking down upon humanity. He is not “among us,” but, instead, “out there,” “somewhere else,” far from our daily lives. We invoke him as a magic talisman only when we need him. This is especially evident, for example, in cartoons, where God is depicted as a comical old man doing funny things. This false image is the one the new atheists latch onto, and taunt

believers, “how can you believe in such a ridiculous God.” They then say that the whole idea of God is simply ignorant superstition. This is what is called setting up a straw man. They paint an image of God that no one could really believe in, and then knock down this false picture. Unfortunately, believers sometimes help them along by similar false images. I so often hear people refer to God as “the man upstairs,” though, of course, he is neither a man (the Word of God became a man, but this did not change the divine nature), nor is he “upstairs.” More seriously, Christians have sometimes made icons of the Father as an old man, but this practice was forbidden by the seventh ecumenical council (Nicaea II, 787): “Christians have never made an icon of the in-

visible and incomprehensible divinity, but it is only insofar as the Word became flesh and dwelt among us that we paint the mysteries of man’s redemption.” Any images of God, except for the human body of our Lord, are only analogical, as the image of the three angels visiting Abraham (Genesis 18), or of the “ancient of days,” in the prophecy of Daniel (chapter 7). The Holy Spirit is sometimes represented as a dove, or a cloud or tongues of fire, images which appear in Scripture, though we know that the Spirit is not material fire or cloud or a bird. St. John of Damascus writes, “But furthermore, who can make a similitude of the invisible, incorporeal (bodiless), uncircumscribed, and undepictable God? It is, then, uttermost insanity and impiety to give a form to the

Godhead.” (The Orthodox Faith 4, 16)

As faithful Christians, we must foster a healthy relationship with God. The mass media today often tries to form an image of God, but the writers and actors involved are not good theologians. God becomes simply one more character among others. They try to depict him as warm and lovable, but more very often make him a comic character. Any true idea of God can only come from our authentic worship and from the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. “I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, of all things both visible and invisible.” **ECL**



SCHOOL OF PRAYER

Father G. Scott Boghossian

PURITY OF INTENTION

So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. I Corinthians 10:31

The whole conduct of a Christian proposes to itself only one end, which is the glory of God; wherefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. - Saint Basil

One of the great secrets of the spiritual life is purity of intention. Theologian Adolphe Tanquerey says that purity of intention is the most effective and practical means of sanctification and that it is within the reach of everyone. To have purity of intention is to direct our whole life towards God. That is to say, we make it our life’s aim to please God, to honor Him, and to serve Him. The promises that accompanied our baptism included this intention, when we renounced Satan, and committed our lives to Christ. Yet this intention must be renewed frequently, even daily, if we want to experience its power. It is the custom of many Catholics to make the “morning offering” in which they pray: “O my God, today I offer you all of my thoughts, words, actions, and sufferings. Grant that they all tend to your glory and my eternal salvation.”

But purity of intention goes beyond a general personal consecration to God, or even a daily renewal of that consecration. Purity of intention demands that we direct each of our actions to the honor and glory of God. Even our most insignificant actions can be offered to God. We can offer our daily tasks, like driving to work, washing the dishes, doing our homework, putting out the trash or anything else that is not a sin. Of course we want to offer any important or significant task up to God as well. Saint Paul the Apostle writes: “So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do,

do all to the glory of God” (I Corinthians 10:31). Saint Basil the Great says, “The whole conduct of a Christian proposes to itself only one end, which is the glory of God; wherefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.”

This practice of purity of intention can turn each and every one of our seemingly insignificant actions into prayer! Saint Thomas Aquinas in his commentary on Romans says that “man prays so long as he directs his whole life toward God.” Saint Paul tells us to pray without ceasing (I Thessalonians 5:17). By directing each one of our actions to the honor and glory of God we are praying continually.

We know that God will reward us both in this life, and in the next, according to our works (Romans 2:6, Revelation 2:23). All of our good works performed in the state of divine life and sanctifying grace merit a supernatural reward. By purity of intention, we can change all of our most insignificant actions into good works that will be rewarded by our loving Heavenly Father! These good works will be rewarded with temporal benefits, an increase in sanctifying grace, and a greater degree of glory in heaven! In Greek Mythology, King Midas is remembered for his ability to turn everything he touched into gold. When someone benefits from every action they undertake, we say they have the “Midas touch.” Purity of intention, doing everything to please God, is the spiritual Midas touch, because with it we turn all of our actions into spiritual gold. Every thing we do with purity of intention becomes valuable in the sight of God. Every thing we do with purity of intention will be generously rewarded by God. With purity of intention, we sanctify all our actions, even the most ordinary.

All spiritual writers recommend practicing purity of intention. Won’t you practice purity of intention? Now that you have given your life to Christ, begin every day offering Him all of your prayers, works, actions, and sufferings. Next, as



you go through your day, remember to offer all your actions to God, no matter how insignificant they may seem. It can be as simple as saying, “Lord, I do this for you” before undertaking any task, small or great. Our goal: We must become saints! Purity of intention is a short-cut to that end. **ECL**

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.

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SPIRITUAL REFLECTIONS

Father Lewis Rabayda

PUTTING OURSELVES SECOND

Advertising's goal is to sell products. The better the advertisement, the more products the company sells, and the more likely they are to continue with the same advertising firm. Which in reality lends to people having the opportunity to do a good job and be paid accordingly for their accomplished work. We do not begrudge anyone their due wages. But in the advancement of advertising, new schemes have developed which not only sell a product, but they sell a perceived lifestyle that the product is a symbol of. A concept that we have been persuaded of is that we are the center of our universe, and that we should not let anything compromise our perceived happiness within that universe. This rewiring of our Christian minds and hearts has led to people functioning as if they are the focus of their reality and that other people and things exist for their use and benefit—if they fit into one's perceived lifestyle. However, this idea of having ourselves come first is not part of The Way, that is, living the life of Christ.

When we focus too much on ourselves it becomes difficult to see the larger picture of life. We can too easily be concerned with our own needs—great or small—and be unable to recognize the needs of others. Yes, there is a certain level to which we need to take care of ourselves so that we can be of good use

to others. Jesus said, "You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye" (Matt 7:5). Jesus was referring to judging others and teaching correct laws, but the same meaning can help us to understand that we need to be in a certain level of physical and spiritual health if we truly want to help our neighbors.

But where does this spiritual health come from? Certainly from practicing a life of virtue, reading Scripture, prayer, and participating in the Sacraments of the Church, but it can also come from putting our faith into action. Even if we are not at our best and our own needs are not being met, we can still go the extra mile to reach out to those who may need help more than we do. When we encounter people we know or strangers we don't know, we have opportunities to serve them in their needs. Jesus taught us to serve others, and indeed His whole life and ministry was for the benefit of all mankind; Jesus taught, healed, forgave, fed, and even brought some back to life. Jesus may have been tired and even hungry while doing these good works, but as His Disciples insisted when they were at the well in Samaria and Jesus was converting the woman there, "Rabbi, eat" but "Jesus said to them, 'I have food to eat of which you do not know,'" "My food is to do the will

of Him who sent Me, and to accomplish His work" (Jn 4:31-34). Even if we are not at our best, we can be fed and spiritually rewarded for giving of ourselves to others.

However, the focus of helping others is not for our own benefit, this would bring us back to the folly of acting selfishly for our own good. Rather, the reason we can place our own needs second and attend to someone else is because of Jesus' example to serve. Jesus showed His Disciples that if they want to be first, then they must be last and servant of all. If we truly love Christ, then we will take seriously His command to spread the Good News to the whole world. We spread the good news to others by our words, but sometimes more efficiently by our actions. We

can lend a hand to those who need it, run an errand for the elderly, help a child with their homework, give money to those in need, and help to comfort those who are spiritually lost. These are indeed spiritual and corporal works of mercy, but they are an especially significant sacrifice when done in times of great inconvenience to ourselves or our plans. When we put ourselves second, and the image of Christ in our neighbor first, we become the hands and feet of Our Lord, fulfilling the will of the Father. **ECL**



UPCOMING EVENTS FOR MAY

Eparchial and Parish Events

Christos Voskrese! Voistinnu Voskrese!

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- 1 Sixth Paschal Sunday*
Ordination of Subdeacon Edward Quinn to the Diaconate
Saint John the Baptist Church, Pottstown, PA 10:30 a.m.
- 5 Holy Ascension of Our Lord
Holy Day of Obligation Chancery closed*
- 8 Seventh Paschal Sunday
Mother's Day
- 15 Pentecost*The Descent of the Holy Spirit

- 16 Pentecost Monday
Simple holyday
- 22 Sunday of All Saints
- 30 Memorial Day
*Civic Holiday * Chancery closed*