



# EASTERN CATHOLIC LIFE

Official Publication of the Byzantine Catholic Eparchy of Passaic

VOL. LII, NO. 10

OCTOBER 2016

## 82ND ANNUAL PILGRIMAGE IN HONOR OF OUR LADY OF PERPETUAL HELP

Mount Saint Macrina, Uniontown, PA, September 3-4, 2016



Bishop Kurt blesses a child after the Children's Procession

September 2016  
**GLORY TO JESUS CHRIST!**  
 Dear Friends,

As we share memories of our recent Pilgrimage in honor of Our Mother of Perpetual Help, two words seem to be repeated over and over - joyous and peaceful. It seems that everyone experienced a sense of calm which touched both body and spirit. The grand "reunion" of our Byzantine Catholic family and friends was a source of joy and encouragement while old friends and new friends shared their faith. It seems that everyone appreciated the reprieve from being bombarded with tales of violence, immorality, and politics.

The weather was certainly the most visible "miracle" with flooding and hurricane winds to our south and threatening storms to the north while we enjoyed warm sunshine and bright blue skies for the entire weekend.

The meaningful liturgical services and the uplifting homilies touched the hearts of many. The cheerful presence and tireless service of our Basilian Associates and generous volunteers, certainly has been pleasing to Jesus and his Most Holy Mother.

We also know that many pilgrims experienced miracles of the heart. Some of the words they shared with us were transformation, forgiveness, freedom, peace, energy, love, comfort.... The full details of each story are only known by Jesus and each pilgrim.

Be assured that we will be remembering you fondly in our daily prayers throughout this year. May each day hold a special blessing for you, and may Jesus lead you back to our holy Mount for Pilgrimage 2017.

With our love, prayers, and deep gratitude,

*Sister Ruth Plante, OSBM*

Sister Ruth Plante, OSBM  
and the Sisters of St. Basil



Sister Ruth Plante, OSBM gives the opening remarks



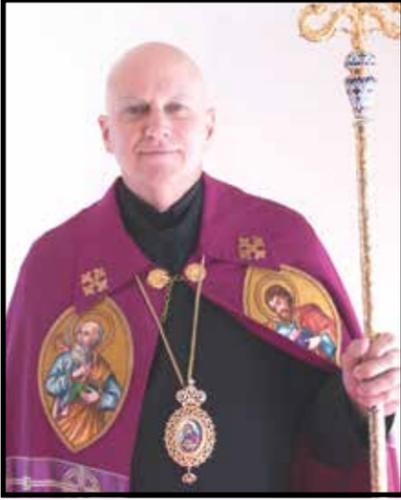
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## I LIFT UP MY EYES...

*Pastoral Reflections of Bishop Kurt*



### HOLY DORMITION PILGRIMAGE TO TRANSCARPATIA

Last month, I loaded up my big suitcases again and set off on another journey to Transcarpathia, that is, the southwest part of Ukraine. I took two large suitcases: one for my things and an empty suitcase hoping to buy vestments while I was there. They asked me to fly to Kosice in Slovakia so the first leg of my journey was to Amsterdam. Schiphol Airport is one of the world's great airports on the North Sea, and, in my opinion, also a very safe airport. I left New Jersey on a Tuesday evening, and arrived in Amsterdam the next morning. After a few hours, I flew to Vienna and then another flight to Kosice. The short flight from Vienna to Kosice was in a small propeller plane, and very low altitude. How pleasant it was to fly low over the Danube River and the green fields and hills of Slovakia! In Kosice, I was met by a pediatric surgeon from Uzhgorod and his son, a Greek Catholic priest, Father Oleksy, who spoke perfect English. They drove me to the border with Ukraine, and into Uzhhorod.

I learned that many Ukrainians near the border buy a high quality used car in Slovakia or Hungary because they are much cheaper, perhaps because, in those countries, people buy more new cars. In any



*The first Byzantine Catholic Capuchin Monastery in the world has opened in Uzhhorod. This friar was teaching an icon writing class*

case, the laws in Ukraine require that one of these cars be driven across the border every five days, or else there is an enormous fine. The line at the border for all these Ukrainians is four hours long or more! They don't actually enter Slovakia; they drive through the Ukrainian border check to get a stamp,



*The newly-ordained priest reads one of the four Gospels at the feast of the Dormition.*

then make a U turn. Then five days later, they spend another half a day sitting in the line at the border. Strange things happen at borders whenever the governments try to fight the laws of economics.

When I arrived at the Cathedral at Uzhorod, Bishop Milan Sasik was waiting, and gave me a very nice apartment. He explained that it is the only apartment with an air conditioner, and he knows that Americans can't sleep without an air conditioner. One of the more interesting things at the Chancery is the photos in the main hall of the celebrations in 1990 when our Church was legalized again after communism; at least it's interesting for us. The pho-



*Hundreds of young people walked for two days for the Feast of the Dormition*

tos there include our own bishops and many of our priests. What a blast from the past! All the bishops are dead and some of the priests, and the priests who were young then, are now 25 years older. There are Archbishops Koscisko and Dolinay, and Bishops Dudick and Bilock, and Fathers Raymond Balta, Joseph Stanichar, Basil Kranyak, Michael Popson, and Deacon Gregory Martinak.

Of course we ate dinner, and I tried to stay awake to get my body on schedule. I never really slept while traveling, and so I had been awake for about 30 hours by bedtime. The food in Ukraine is always so good. There are always fresh tomatoes and cucumbers at every meal no matter what else is on the table.

After a day or so, the interviews began. My real reason for traveling to Ukraine was in the hopes of finding more priests who would like to come work in our Eparchy. God blessed our prayers and (believe it or not) seven priests are asking to come join the Eparchy of Passaic. Some spoke English, and some don't yet, but all are eager to come evangelize with us. The faith is so very strong there, and they are eager to come share their light in the encroaching shadows of our country. All of the priests that I interviewed are experienced pastors and builders, though young. More than one priest has built three churches and a couple of rectories. One priest who built three churches said that the Bishop simply pointed at a place on the map—and then he had Divine Liturgy on the desk of the mayor when he got there. Another builder priest said that he organized soccer leagues and was gratified that he was able to get the Russian Orthodox boys to play on the teams with the Greek Catholics. Though they don't all know English yet, they are all multilingual. I conducted the interviews with a translator, but at the end of each one, I looked at the priest and said, *Xhochu tebye v'Ameriki*, that is,

"I want you in America." One priest got a big grin and said, so you do speak *Po-Nashemu!* Everywhere in our Eparchy I have asked people to pray that God send us more good priests, and people must be praying very hard.

My week there coincided with the feast of the Dormition on the old calendar, August 28. I always remember that date because in 1996 I was at the Kremlin (as a tourist) in Moscow. The Patriarch of Moscow celebrated the Divine Liturgy at the Church of the Dormition (*Uspensky*) in the Kremlin. Those churches are very small because they were only intended for the highest aristocrats, not the common

people. But afterwards, there was a procession and I was able to get a good position. The Patriarch drenched me with holy water from head to toe right after I snapped a picture of him. Little did he know he was blessing a future Greek Catholic bishop.

In Transcarpathia, we celebrate the Dormition with a major pilgrimage. And over there, when they say a pilgrimage, they still mean a *pilgrimage!* They walk for two days. Almost all the pilgrims were young people. When young people walk, they really move quickly. The government provided a police escort for the front and the rear to protect them from traffic. Most of the motorists and bus passengers waved and honked and blessed themselves. Bishop Sasik and I joined the pilgrimage for half a day, and we walked about 18 kilometers. Since I am out of shape, I expected to be crippled the next day, but somehow survived. The pilgrims sang most of the time. We encountered a few horse drawn wagons, and one horse was terrified by the approaching crowd and was rearing up. His driver had to unhitch



*The gypsies go through the garbage outside the monastery—a mother and her child*



*A young mother keeps her toddler under the Gospel book for the reading of the Gospel*

the poor animal and run out into a field while the procession passed. The throng stopped for breaks from time to time, including a moleben at one of our churches and an outdoor lunch. I think the pilgrimage started with about 250 young people and grew to about 750 by the end of the second day. The goal of the pilgrimage was the Basilian monastery where the miraculous image of the Mother of God is located. There was a great outdoor Divine Liturgy that evening for all the pilgrims. The Dormition was on Sunday, and the pilgrimage spanned Friday and Saturday.

One morning, I had the opportunity to celebrate Divine Liturgy at one of the new parish churches in the city of Uzhorod. The assistant pastor is Father Bogdan Savula, whom many people know in our



*The Rector of the seminary shows off some of the tomatoes they grow for food. Your donations finance all of their food*

eparchy and in Pittsburgh because he spent a lot of time here as a seminarian. It was the first time that I saw him since he became a priest, and the first time that I met his wife. They have no children yet, but they have high hopes. The parish priest said that they needed \$500 to finish the heating in this enormous church, so I helped him out. Don't you wish our expenses here were that small?

Father Bogdan is also the store manager for their church supply store. Father Custer asked me to buy



*Bishop Milan feeds a donkey*

some vestments for the Cathedral, and I bought those that day, too. They were then donated in memory of John Chanda, one of the long time pillars of our Cathedral who fell asleep in the Lord this summer.

When I celebrated the Divine Liturgy over there, they gave me Old Slavonic books to use. I stumbled through it at first, but it seemed like by the end of the week I was remembering most of my parts. They also asked me to preach a little sermon, and Father Savula translated it into *Po-Nashemu*. That morning I also visited the new Capuchin Monastery, the only Byzantine Catholic Capuchin Monastery in the world. The monastery is built where the poor people live. They asked why the monastery is next to the garbage dumpsters, and the Superior said, "Because where there is garbage there are people." And indeed, the gypsies come to take things from the garbage, and they throw things out of the dumpsters onto the ground. A gypsy woman arrived with her little girl on cue and started throwing things out of the dumpster onto the ground.

My next visit was to the seminary. The rector is a very busy man, but he made time to show me around. Bishop Sasik works constantly raising money and begging around Europe and America. But the rector of the seminary made it a point to tell me that the Eparchy of Passaic is their most faithful sponsor. As you know, our generous people have paid for the food for the seminary ever since it opened 20 years ago. Bishop Dudick made that commitment and our Eparchy has kept that commitment ever since. The seminary is a very beautiful design, but was not well constructed. In the past couple of years, most of the structure inside and out has been reconstructed so



*Our seminary in Uzhorod*

that it is beautiful again and better protected from the elements. One of the new features is the mural in the refectory (dining hall). I got a little concert from some of the choir that was preparing for the tour of the United States.

The high point of the trip was the great Divine Liturgy for the Feast of the Dormition on Sunday morning at our original Cathedral in Mukachevo. As with most big services, it seems like there are many distractions, especially for the clergy. But a little ways into the service, I realized that I was in the midst of a Divine Liturgy worthy of the celestial banquet. Remember the Slavic ambassadors said, "We knew not whether we were in heaven or on earth." I realized that I should relax and enjoy this beautiful liturgy. It was like being carried out to sea by big waves of music. It was a foretaste of Paradise. In addition to the beautiful feast day, a priest was ordained at the Divine Liturgy. When he walked around the altar three times, or more accurately was dragged running around the altar, there were three different priests and one of them was his older brother. What a happy day for that family! Afterwards was the procession around the church with four gospels, and the

newly ordained priest read one of the four. I was allowed to soak people with the holy water on one quadrant. When I wasn't getting them wet enough, a seminarian encouraged me to really soak them. "They like it", he said. So many people with children wanted their children to be blessed in some way by the procession. At the fourth Gospel on the porch of the church, a woman knelt under the book so that her toddler could be in the middle of the proclamation of the Gospel. What a tender scene that was!

Well, I was not ready to leave our beautiful Transcarpathia, but I had to get home for Uniontown. The same generous man drove across the border and to Kosice. We were stopped by the police in Slovakia, probably because of our Ukrainian license



*Our Church has its own radio station now in Zakarpattia*

plates. When the cops saw there were two clergy in the car, they waved us on. We had time to visit the gothic cathedral in Kosice which is the farthest east of all European gothic cathedrals. It was worth seeing. Kosice was recently transformed into a beautiful town by its hard working mayor, and the people of Slovakia recognized his worth by electing him President.

During my layover in Vienna, I was able to visit the International Theological Institute founded by Saint John Paul II. Almost all the students are American, and it will be the ideal place to send our new priests to learn their English while we process their immigration papers. It was very manifest how much God Himself blessed this journey at every single step to shower his gifts on our Eparchy. Your prayers bore fruit.

My return connections were a bit trying. I spent the night in the Amsterdam airport, crossed the Atlantic, went home and washed some clothes, and then caught a flight to Pittsburgh for the Uniontown Otpust. By the time I went to bed that night, I think I was up for 50 hours! Bishop Sasik, though, had a harder journey ahead. He didn't really recover from the pilgrimage, and he was facing a grueling tour of Germany and Switzerland to meet with the many sponsors of his projects for our Church. At Uniontown, too many people told me how their faith was renewed and strengthened by their experience at Otpust. I can say the same about my trip to Zakarpattia. What beautiful holy people!

*+Kent Brunette*



# PEOPLE YOU KNOW AROUND THE EPARCHY

## IN ANNANDALE...

Epiphany of Our Lord Parish in Annandale, VA, held its 43rd Annual Slavic American Festival on September 11, with large crowds enjoying spectacular weather.



The festival's fun was equally marked by a solemn procession of clergy, altar servers, seminarians, Epiphany scouts and fire department personnel to a flag-raising ceremony commemorating 9-11.



Epiphany's Pastor, Father John Basarab, introduces the seminarian choir to his parishioners.



The seminarian choir from Blessed Theodore Romzha seminary in Uzhorod, Ukraine, performed sacred Slavic music at the festival. They offered an abridged version of their performance at numerous churches in the Eparchy of Passaic in September, and will return for a final U.S. performance at Epiphany at 7:00 pm on October 1.



Visitors this year included Father John Zeyack, Bishop Nil Luschak, Auxiliary Bishop of Mukachevo in Ukraine, and Archimandrite Petro Beresh, Chancellor of the Mukachevo Eparchy and Rector of the Blessed Theodore Romzha Seminary.



It was a full house at Epiphany to hear the seminarian choir, conducted by Father Myroslav Ryabinchak!

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## IN MEMORIAM

### +LINDA FISHER, EPARCHIAL FINANCIAL CONTROLLER Eparchial Priests Fondly Remember +Linda Fisher, 1954-2016

Linda had a very unique way of making each and every one of us special to her. Before my retirement, whenever I would call, she would answer my questions, but more than this she would endear herself to me with her kindness and her cheerful manner. There wasn't anything that was too much trouble and she never failed to inquire how I was or how things were at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish, Levittown, PA. I felt a kinship to her although for many years she was a voice on the other end of the line and I never met her in person until a few years ago. During my 60 years as a priest, bishops came and went but Linda was always the SHINING STAR at the chancery office. Eternal rest grant unto her, O Lord.

-Father Myron Badnerosky

I always appreciated discussing parish finances with Linda. She was always kind and understanding when giving me advice about financial matters. I will miss her.

-Father Frank Hanincik

In loving memory we celebrated a 40 day Divine Liturgy for +Linda on Wednesday, Sept. 7, 2016, at 8:30 am. Following her death, and in gratitude for her time, talent and treasure for the good of our church, we also celebrated a Panachida following the 2 Sunday Liturgies and took the petitions for the deceased during the regularly scheduled weekday Liturgies. May her memory be eternal.

Father Michael Popson

Linda was a wonderful person to know and work with. She was a female Nathaniel - she was very direct and always stated things as they were. While this seemed abrupt to me at first, I grew to appreciate and respect her for her honesty, dignity, and hard work ethic. She was also very supportive and generous of heart and always ready to field a difficult question. I miss her but I know that I will always prayerfully remember her.

-Father Ronald Barusefski, J.C.L.

I am thankful for Linda's kind and precise advice whenever I called her office for assistance.

-Father Conan Timoney

It was my esteemed privilege to know Linda Fisher as she served most capably and well as our Eparchial Controller. I was always impressed with her competence and availability. No matter how busy she may have been, she took the time to assist you and followed through later. She was indeed a truly responsible, devoted, and respectful employee. She had a phenomenal memory and knew just about all our priests and parishes. Even as she began to battle with her condition, her heart was with the Eparchy. May her soul rest now in peace and her memory be eternal.

-Msgr. John Sekellick, J.C.L.

My interactions with the chancery staff over the years have been few and far between. Yet, at the same time, my dealings with the lay staff, including Linda, have always been pleasant and professional. I respect their- and Linda's in particular - vital service to the apostolic mission of the Church of Passaic.

-Father Robert F. Slesinski, Ph.D.

Always serious, but time for a smile  
Always willing to go the last mile.

Giving out gold stars for reports in on time,

Giving advice to hold budgets in line.

Loving "her" priests all the way to the end,

I will miss you most dearly, my ally, my friend.

-Father Michael Salnicko

In all my dealings with Linda, either in person or on the phone, through the many years she served the Eparchy of Passaic, I found her to be an excellent and dedicated controller, very dependable, eager to help, and always gracious. May Our Blessed Lord, through the prayers of His Most Pur Mothers, grant Linda blessed repose and eternal memory!

-Msgr. Robert Senetsky, J.C.D.,

When I worked with Linda, she was very patient with me. She was always encouraging when I had problems regarding finances and always was a supportive person. She will be greatly missed.

-Father Sal Pignato

## TRICKY TRAY AUCTION

### SAINT MARY PARISH HILLSBOROUGH, NJ

Friday, October 7, 2016 7:00PM-

Doors and Kitchen open at 5:00PM • Admission \$10

Sorry, no children under 18 allowed.

Over 100 gift certificates and many prizes including flat screen TV, outdoor grill, Kitchen Aid Mixer, ipad, X Box, household items, appliances, designer handbags, theme baskets, door prizes, food and a 50/50.

Tickets are \$10 which include: one sheet of tickets, delicious desserts, coffee and tea.

Stuffed cabbage, kielbasa and sauerkraut sandwiches, meatball sandwiches, hotdogs, hamburgers, eggplant parmesan, pierogi, soda and water can be purchased, so come early.

Tickets can be pre-ordered by contacting:

Marge at 908-722-5894 or Betty at 908-782-8325.

Bring your friends and be ready for an evening of fun, good food, and winning some great prizes. Attendees must be 18 years of age.

Saint Mary Byzantine Catholic Church,  
1900 Brooks Blvd., Hillsborough, NJ

More information available on [www.trickytray.com](http://www.trickytray.com)



# BISHOP'S APPEAL 2016

BYZANTINE CATHOLIC EPARCHY OF PASSAIC  
 445 LACKAWANNA AVENUE, WOODLAND PARK, NEW JERSEY

*"For to us a Child is born,*

*wonderful*  
**COUNSELOR**

**The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father**  
**THE PRINCE OF PEACE"**

Isaiah 9:6-7

**PLEDGE NOW THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2016**

BYZANTINE CATHOLIC EPARCHY OF PASSAIC

**BISHOP'S APPEAL 2016**

In gratitude to God and to honor my commitment to the Church, I have prayerfully considered My gift to the Eparchy of Passaic this year and faithfully pledge:

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**Please make check payable and mail to:**

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**PRAYERFULLY PLEDGE & RETURN THIS FORM TO THE EPARCHY BY DEC. 31.** All Money received after Dec. 31 will be credited to your 2017 tax year



My dear Friends,  
 Glory to Jesus Christ!

“Gentlemen may cry, Peace, Peace – but there is no peace.” These stirring words were spoken by Patrick Henry in his famous speech at the beginning of our American republic. Most people don’t know that he was quoting from the Prophet Jeremiah! Indeed, it seems as though everywhere we turn, people are longing for peace, as they were 27 centuries ago when Jeremiah and Isaiah were writing. For those of us who believe in Jesus Christ, St. Paul promises us “the peace of God that surpasses all understanding”. At the Last Supper, Our Lord said to us, “Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I give to you not as the world gives. Do not let your heart be troubled or afraid.” As Christians, we turn to our faith and our churches to find the peace of God that surpasses all understanding, and we in turn carry that peace into the world.

The theme of this year’s Bishop Appeal is the Prince of Peace. Isaiah described the Messiah as “Wonderful”, that is, filled with wonders and miracles. Our church is filled with wonders and miracles. Wherever I visit, so many people tell me about the wonders and consolations that God has worked in their lives. Our Church in Ukraine too is a miracle. Our Eparchy is so generous to help them financially while they help us spiritually and with new priests. Then Isaiah describes the Messiah as “Counselor”. Some of our clergy began the Word of Life Institute in our own Eparchy. They have provided rich resources for our pastors and parishes to understand and love the Word of God as it is read in our parishes. This year they are sponsoring a bible conference in Pittsburgh for our whole Church. Isaiah describes the Messiah as “The Mighty God”. A man who joined

our church a year ago said that he loves the fact that we call Jesus “Christ our true God” so many times in our Liturgy. Nowadays many people see Jesus as a great teacher, but are afraid to come out and say that He is Divine. In our church we proclaim Him as God, even in every Icon of Christ. Ever since the Resurrection, the devil has worked tirelessly to convince people that God did not take on flesh and that He does not love us. But our Church teaches us the true faith fearlessly for anyone who comes to our Divine Liturgy. Isaiah calls the Messiah “The Everlasting Father”. St. John Chrysostom tells us that Christ says ‘I am Father, I am brother, I am bridegroom. I am friend. I am all things.’ And finally, Isaiah reveals that Jesus Christ is the “Prince of Peace”. When people around the world ask for peace, we point them to the Prince of Peace, who is Jesus Christ.

When we started the American republic, we tried a new experiment, life without kings and aristocrats, and with freedom of religion. Part of that experiment is that we don’t have aristocrats to pay for our churches, and we have to do it ourselves. Our people are the most generous in all the Catholic Church, and I thank you for all your generosity in the past. Once a year we ask you to help the Bishop and Eparchy as well as your local parish. Our seminarians cost money, bringing in new priests costs money, bringing in new priests from Europe costs money, travelling costs money, taking care of priests who can’t work costs money. I ask you once again to be generous.

May God grant peace to you and your loved ones.

*+Kurt Brunette*

**YOUR BISHOP’S APPEAL GIFTS SUPPORT OUR EPARCHIAL PROGRAMS**

**OUR GOAL: \$650,000**

**PARISH REVITALIZATION**

Capital improvements and renovations in specific parishes  
**\$165,000**

**ASSISTANCE TO BLESSED THEODORE ROMZHA SEMINARY**

Starting with Bishop Dudick, our Eparchy has fed the seminarians of the Uzhorod Seminary of the Eparchy of Mukachevo since it was reopened after communism. Bishop Šašik has ordained over 150 priests in 13 years, some of whom serve in the Eparchy of Passaic.  
**\$50,000**

**DEACON FORMATION**

The present class has completed year two of the Deacon Formation Program and looks forward to serve the faithful of the Eparchy in the near future.  
**\$15,000**

**EDUCATION OF SEMINARIANS AND PRIESTS**

Seminary studies and formation; pastoral training programs; and graduate studies. Tuition and room & board for one seminarian is \$25,000 for one year at Saints Cyril and Methodius Seminary in Pittsburgh  
**\$50,000**

**EASTERN CHRISTIAN FORMATION**

Publications, Youth Ministry, Family Enrichment, Catechist and Coordinator Formation  
**\$45,000**

**HERITAGE MUSEUM AND LIBRARY**

Preserving our beautiful heritage for future generations to enjoy and learn about their ancestors and Church history  
**\$25,000**

**PAROCHIAL FAMILY EVENTS**

Regional events to help educate, support and build up the spiritual strength of our Eparchial families  
**\$20,000**

**DIGITAL OUTREACH AND COMMUNICATIONS**

Maintenance of the Eparchial website and media coverage of special events  
**\$15,000**

**YOUTH EVENTS**

Eparchial Summer Youth Camp, the Altar Server Congress, Eparchial and Intereparchial ByzanTEEN Rallys and other regional events to foster spirituality in Community  
**\$40,000**

**RETREAT & EDUCATIONAL CENTERS:**

CARPATHIAN VILLAGE  
 - and -  
 THE BISHOP MICHAEL DUDICK  
 EVANGELIZATION CENTER, SYBERTSVILLE, PA  
 Improvements and renovations to these faith facilities  
**\$100,000**

**PAROCHIAL SUPPORT**

Grants to individual parishes for support, renovation and maintenance  
**\$125,000**

**give online**

www.eparchyofpassaic.com



## 62ND ANNUAL HOLY DORMITION PILGRIMAGE

### Sister Servants of Mary Immaculate

Sloatsburg, New York

The 62nd Holy Dormition Pilgrimage, hosted by the Sisters Servants of Mary Immaculate in Sloatsburg, NY, on August 13-14, was truly a blessed experience for the 3,111 pilgrims who journeyed from near and far as well as for the Sisters Servants. The theme of “Jesus – the Face of Mercy; Mary – the Mother of Mercy” permeated the services, homilies, presentations and activities during the weekend.

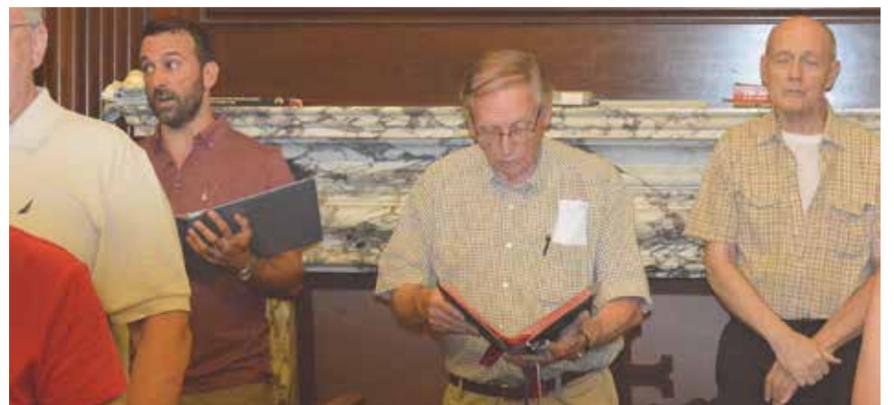
This year’s pilgrimage was blessed with the presence of Bishop Peter Libasci, Bishop of Manchester, NH on Saturday, August 13th. Over a hundred people packed into the terrace and overflowed into gallery to hear Bishop Peter’s

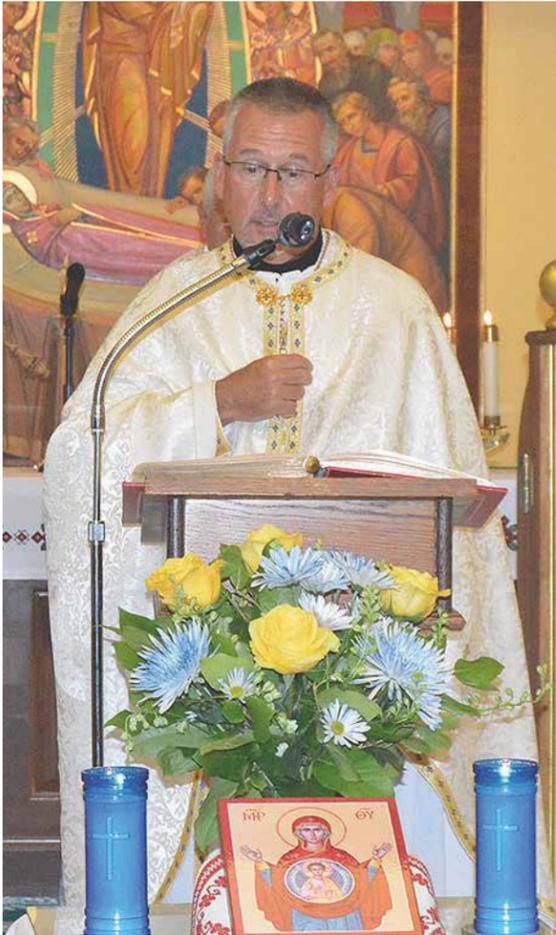
presentation: “The Joy of Love: Be the Sign of Mercy Wherever Family Life Exists.” Bishop Peter touched the hearts of those present with his passionate sharing of stories and his challenge to be that source of joy and mercy in our world. The dangerous heat index forced us to break tradition and celebrate the 5:00 pm Divine Liturgy in Saint Mary Chapel instead of the grotto. Bishop Peter, who has bi-ritual faculties, was the main celebrant and homilist.

In the evening Bishop Kurt Burnette, Bishop of the Byzantine Eparchy of Passaic, along with hierarchy and clergy from Stamford Eparchy, the Archeparchy of Philadelphia and the Byzantine

Eparchy of Passaic, celebrated the moleben to the Mother of God at the Grotto. Bishop Kurt’s homily began with the question of why we come to pray at pilgrimage when we can pray anywhere, until it was interrupted by thunder and lightning at which time the pilgrims and clergy quickly exited from the grotto!

The heat did not deter the thousands of pilgrims on Sunday, August 14th as they were lined up for confessions by 8:30 am and continued to prayerfully wait in long lines. Approximately 24 dedicated priests, including a bishop, heard confessions, from morning until the afternoon. The pilgrimage was blessed with the Mater Molitvy/





Mothers of Prayer filling the Chapel of Saint Mary as they prayed the rosary and sang hymns to the Mother of God. An atmosphere of prayer was created with a Powerpoint presentation of various icons of Christ and the Mother of God accompanied by the singing of the Jesus Prayer in Ukrainian, playing throughout the day.

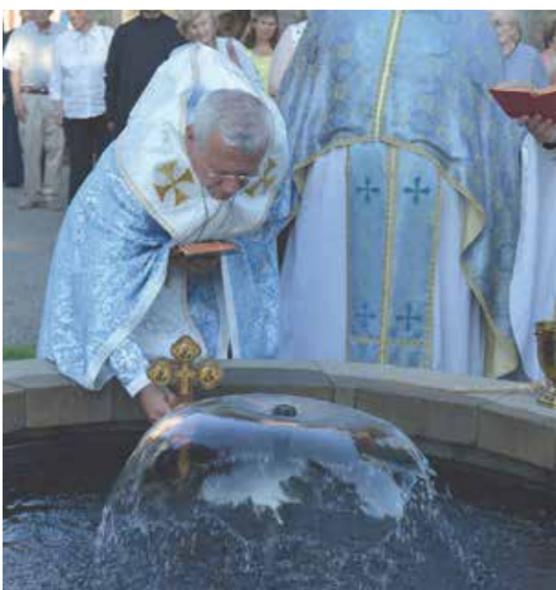
The Pontifical Divine Liturgy was celebrated by Metropolitan Archbishop Stefan Soroka, Bishop Paul Chomnycky, Bishop Bohdan Danylo, Bishop John Bura, Bishop Basil Losten and concelebrating clergy. Bishop John Bura emphasized the fact that Pope Francis brought the Ukrainian icon "Doors of Mercy", to open this Jubilee Year

of Mercy, calling all of us to witness mercy like Jesus – the Face of Mercy and Mary – the Mother of Mercy.

The Sisters Servants of Mary Immaculate extend their heartfelt gratitude to the Hierarchy, clergy for their presence and spiritual leadership. We are grateful to all of the pilgrims who travelled to Sloatsburg to receive the plenary indulgence and other graces despite the oppressive heat and could have stayed in their air-conditioned homes. Finally, we acknowledge, extend gratitude, and could not have hosted this year's pilgrimage without the volunteers from the LUC, Lay Associates, local parishes, and from the village of Sloatsburg,

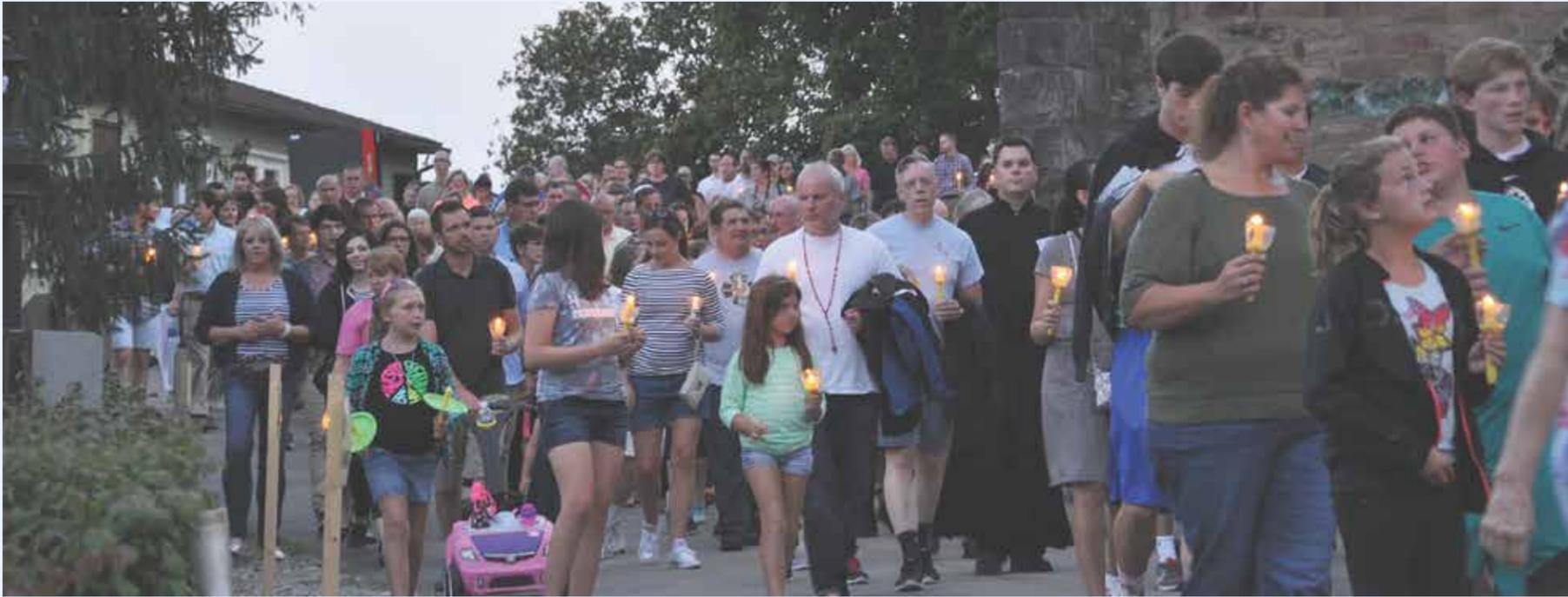
who helped us prepare for this huge endeavor, months in advance, the week before pilgrimage and during pilgrimage. We extend our gratitude to those generous parishes that donated hundreds of dozens of pyrohy and helped make holubchi. May our Loving God bless you and your families abundantly.

In the closing moleben, Bishop Bohdan Danylo encouraged the pilgrims to volunteer during the year as we prepare for the pilgrimage. We do need your help to continue the Pilgrimage and will advertise dates for opportunity to help prepared for the 63rd Holy Dormition Pilgrimage which will be August 12 & 13, 2017.

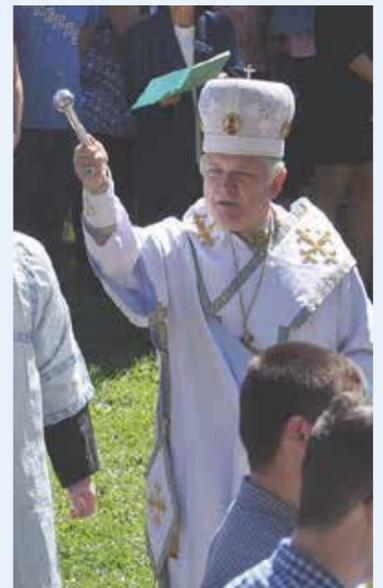


# 82ND ANNUAL PILGRIMAGE IN HONOR OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

Mount Saint Macrina, Uniontown, PA



# OR OF OUR LADY OF PERPETUAL HELP



# SUNDAY EVENING DIVINE LITURGY TO BEGIN IN BAYONNE PARISH

## SAINT JOHN THE BAPTIST

15 EAST 26TH STREET, BAYONNE, NJ  
All Welcome to Attend!

For the convenience of the area faithful, Bishop Kurt has introduced the celebration of a Sunday evening Divine Liturgy at St. John the Baptist Byzantine Catholic Church, beginning Sunday, October 2nd at 7pm.

Father Marcel Szabo, Pastor, together with Byzantine Catholic clergy from Northern and Central New Jersey, will provide a weekly schedule of service which will include:

- The Holy Mystery of Reconciliation prior to services
- 6:30 PM - Prayer Service (Moleben) to Blessed Miriam Teresa
- 7:00 PM - Celebration of the Sunday Divine Liturgy.

**Saint John Church is the baptismal parish of Blessed Miriam Teresa Demjanovich.**

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## Seminary Choir to Visit American Churches

The Orientale Lumen Foundation announces that a third Seminary Concert Tour is scheduled to take place on September 11 through October 2, at Byzantine Catholic parishes and other sites throughout the Northeastern United States. The choir will include 16 seminarians from the Blessed Theodore Romzha Seminary in Uzhorod, Transcarpathia, Ukraine and will sing a two-hour concert of sacred music, both plain chant and choral arrangements, in the Church Slavonic language.

This third tour will provide an opportunity for parishioners of these American churches to meet future priests who will mostly become married, and for the seminarians from Europe to experience American culture and church life. Some 20 priests from Europe now serve in Byzantine Catholic parishes across the US. The concerts will be free and open to the public. Free-will donations made at the concerts, after travel expenses are paid, will be sent to the seminary to help with seminarian education and formation.

Several special events will take place during the tour: the choir will sing at the 43rd Annual Slavic American Festival at Epiphany Church in Annandale on September 11th, an ecumenical concert will take place at Saint Nicholas Orthodox Cathedral in Washington, DC, on September 30th, and a pilgrimage Divine Liturgy will be celebrated in Church Slavonic for the Feast of the Protection of the Theotokos (October 1st) in the Ruthenian Chapel of the Basilica of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, DC.

The Orientale Lumen Foundation, based in Fairfax, VA, is a "grass-roots" ecumenical movement of laity and clergy who promote Eastern Christianity and dialogue between the Catholic and Orthodox Churches through annual conferences, pilgrimages and media recordings. For further information about the tour, call 703-691-8862 or visit: www.seminaryconcert-tour.com or www.olfoundation.net.

### Concerts and Divine Liturgies will take place at the following locations:

- Thursday, Sept. 29 . . . Saint Gregory Church . . . . . Beltsville, MD
- Friday, Sept. 30 . . . . Saint Nicholas Orthodox Cathedral . . . Washington, DC
- Saturday, Oct. 1 . . . . Patronage Church (AM Liturgy) . . . . . Baltimore, MD
- Saturday, Oct. 1 . . . . Epiphany Church (PM Concert) . . . . . Annandale, VA
- Sunday, Oct. 2 . . . . Epiphany Church (AM Liturgy) . . . . . Annandale, VA



## FAITH AND COMMUNITY ISSUES

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

### LEADING A HOLY LIFE WITH GOD

“You have made us for yourself O Lord . . . becomes holy.” (Saint Augustine)

#### Growth in Holiness

The MPHI document (USCCB, 2006) presents the challenge of balance between human friendships, which are necessary for a full healthy life, and our relationship with God, the culmination of our existence and the fulfillment of all longing. The document makes clear the point that the purpose of our being created is to have a share in the fullness of the relationship among Father, Son, and Holy Spirit so that the fullness of our potential as human beings may be completely actualized.

For the Authors of MPHI, one of the ministries of the Church specifically to persons with a homosexual inclination has as its goal “the overriding aim of fostering the greatest possible friendship with God, participation in the divine life of the Trinity through sanctifying grace” (MPHI, 2006, p.12). Within the relationship with God comes a sharing in the very life of God which is holiness. To be in relationship with God means one is sharing in that very holiness and therefore

This attaining of holiness is not limited to an exclusive few but the call to holiness is universal and, particular to Christians, those already under the rule of Christ. The document quotes Vatican Council II in that “all Christians in whatever state or walk of life are called to the fullness of christian life and to the perfection of charity, and this holiness is conducive to a more human way of living even in society here on earth” (Documents of Vat II, Austin Flannery, OP, ed.1996, #40). The achievement of this goal comes about in a cooperative effort between human performance and Divine Intervention; it is a gift from Christ. Achieving this comes about through cooperation with the Gifts given from Christ and following the template of His Life and so in conforming the human will to mirror that of Christ we do the will of God universally through the activity of service to our neighbors unconditionally, with our whole heart.

Since the Church works from the premise of universal salvation and consequently, the call to holiness is likeminded, every aid, every help, every encouragement to embrace this unique Di-

vine relationship unequivocally is to be extended to persons of homosexual inclination. The Document makes note of the effort and struggle made in the acquisition of this charism of holiness leading to the mastery of the self, and uses the analogy of the way of the Cross as the path of Jesus first and those who follow Him, secondly. Holiness comes with a price; it is the pearl of great price, which involves both renunciation and internal struggle, a dying and resurrection that is constant.

According to the Document MPHI (2006), The Church indeed Christ Himself offers the Mysteries of Eucharist and Penance as essential in the role of consolation and a sure help in times of need and temptation to stay faithful and steady on the path of holiness. These Mysteries offer a unique and radical approach to the Passion, Death, and Resurrection of Christ, offering us hope and direction in our desire to mirror Christ in our lives and an invitation to participate in the very center of Christian life, the Paschal Mystery of Christ Himself.

Hope is provided in the experience of these Mysteries, to those who seek to persevere in the following of Christ’s example in daily living. The support of prayer on a daily basis and the regular reading of Sacred Scripture with diligence becomes a crucial support in overcoming the spiritual struggle which comes about through the Christian Life lived as fully as possible.

#### Obstacles found in Culture

MPHI makes it clear that any ministry that is legitimate ministry must be guided by Church Teaching in this case regarding people of a homosexual inclination. To be fair to the homosexually inclined person, effective ministry must be based itself upon authentic teaching and correct understanding regarding the “human person and the place of sexuality in human life. ‘Departure from the Church’s teaching or silence about it, in an effort to provide pastoral care is neither caring nor pastoral.’ Love and truth go together” (MPHI, 2006, p. 13). A life that is authentically Christ-like is a life lived in truth and in love. Anything to the contrary notwithstanding. MPHI (2006) makes it clear that while the Church does strike a balance between the natural law inherent in Creation and the Traditions and Teaching found in Sacred Scripture, in the cases of Homosexually inclined persons these teachings offer a clarity of hope and enlightenment as a viable option to the confusion, emotional chaos and conflicts that occur in daily living. Nevertheless there are several guidelines the church uses in teaching and counseling homosexually inclined people which are seen by the world as problematic:

- In the face of intolerance of perceived differences, violence and /or unjust discrimination are never validated as ways of dealing with the moral issues of homosexuality.
- Moral relativism or Fletcher’s situational ethics eliminate the reality of making moral judgments based on objective truths. The concept of no intrinsically evil activity

Come to the First  
**Eastern Catholic Bible Conference**  
November 4-5<sup>th</sup>, 2016  
St. John the Baptist Byzantine Catholic Cathedral - Munhall, PA

Sponsored by:  
Byzantine Catholic Eparchy of Passaic  
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WORD  
of LIFE  
INSTITUTE FOR  
EASTERN CHRISTIAN  
FORMATION

### A Holy Nation The Church in God’s Plan of Salvation

The Church as God’s Holy People is at the heart of His unfolding plan of salvation that is ultimately fulfilled in Christ. The Bible relates how this plan for a universal covenant kingdom and a temple made of living stones for all the nations unfolds through particular stages in the history of God’s People.

#### Talks Include:

- Are Eastern Catholics “Bible Christians”?
- Reading the Bible in the Heart of the Church
- The Seven Ages of the Kingdom in the Bible
- Biblical Images of the Church
- Sacred Reading: How to Pray the Scriptures
- The Bible and the Domestic Church
- The Bible and the New Evangelization

“But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s own people, that you may declare the wonderful deeds of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.” – 1 Peter 2:9

Friday 6:30-9pm and Saturday 8:30am-4:30pm (\$30 per participant)



#### Speakers

Father Hezekias Carnazzo  
Father Alexander Wroblecky  
Father Deacon Daniel Dozjer  
Catherine Alexander

REGISTER at [www.EPARCHYOFFASSAIC.com](http://www.EPARCHYOFFASSAIC.com)

but all activity is exclusively subjective in nature presents a moral difficulty that the Church stands against contrary to Moral relativism or Fletcher’s Situational Ethics.

- The attitude that sexual morality should be left for the decision-making part of the individual to decide using as criteria one’s own preferences and values using as the touchstone the maxim: “No hurt, no foul”.

The Church has always worked from a systematic configuration of values and norms that are based on an objective law inherent in Nature imbued with morality and ethical standards that uphold the dignity of the human person. These moral and ethical standards are backed by Sacred Scripture and Tradition and form part of Divine Revelation.

While the Church vigorously supports the inherent dignity of every human being in the words of the document, “Nevertheless “sexual orientation” does not constitute a quality comparable to race, ethnic background, etc. in respect to non-discrimination” Therefore, it is not unjust to oppose granting to homosexual couples benefits that in justice belong to marriage alone. “When marriage is redefined so as to make other relationships equivalent to it, the institution of marriage is devalued and further weakened. The weakening of this basic institution at all levels and by various forces has already exacted too high a social cost” (USCCB, *Between Man and Woman; Questions and Answers About Marriage and Same-sex Unions*, 2003, question 5, MPHI, 2006, p.15).

MPHI (2006) also makes very clear the real problem with hedonism and the pursuit of plea-

sure as an end in itself. It makes a connection with consumerism of our culture as an expression of this hedonistic tendency. The tendency to maximize pleasure and eliminate responsibility associated with it, places sexuality in the perspective of simply another form of pleasure the result is a promiscuous culture the upshot of which is the virtue of chastity loses all meaning and is seen as a perversion rather than the virtue it is.

What avenues can be pursued to bring about healing, reconciliation, and wholeness of life? Is there a way to pastorally approach the person and the issues? What options are available for authentic pastoral care to be given and received? These questions will be looked upon in the next installment. The final installment will follow this at which time the conclusion of this series will occur. **ECL**

## CENTESIMUS ANNUS PRO PONTIFICE & THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA PRESENT A CERTIFICATE PROGRAM IN CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING

2016 WASHINGTON, DC: Centesimus Annus Pro Pontifice-USA\* (CAPP) and The Catholic University of America (CUA) jointly announce the “2016 Certificate Program in Catholic Social Teaching” from October 30 to November 4.

This week-long, graduate level investigation of the Church’s deep patrimony of social teaching is open to diocesan administrators/department directors, and their staff, in Religious Education, Catholic Charities, Catholic Conference, Social Justice, and other ministries. It is also open to clergy, religious, seminarians and lay leaders in philanthropy, business, the profes-

sions, and academia who wish to have an in-depth understanding of the Church’s social teachings from noted scholars, theologians, and professionals.

The certificate program promotes understanding and application of CST as developed and advanced by the magisterium over the past 125 years, starting with *Rerum Novarum* and emphasizing the Church’s current statement in *Centesimus Annus*, *Deus Caritas Est*, *Caritas in Veritate* and *Evangelii Gaudium*.

### Lecture Topics

The extensive program topics include:

- Introduction to Catholic Social Teaching (CST)
- The Three Cornerstone Principles of CST- Human Dignity, Solidarity, Subsidiarity
- History of CST
- CST & Culture
- CST & the Developing World
- CST & Free Market Economy
- CST & Democracy, and the Role of the State
- CST & the Family
- Consumerism & Alienation the Developed World’s Main Dysfunctions
- CST a Pastoral Perspective

In addition to facilitated evening discussions on the Three Cornerstones of CST, Discernment and Spirituality will be explored.

Participants are welcomed to experience a retreat environment having housing at the Washington Retreat House including daily Liturgy of the Hours, Mass, and a personal tour of the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception.

### Registration

Early Bird Registration- payment by September 30th \$1545.00 save \$150.00

Final Deadline Registration- October 14th \$1695.00

The program fee includes tuition, lectures, housing, meals from Sunday evening to Saturday a.m. (if needed) and workbooks.

Transportation costs and arrangements are the responsibility of the participants.

Please mail check (made out to CAPP-USA) and copy of your registration form to:

Mrs. Patricia Fakharzadeh, 829 Ellis Place, Oradell, NJ 07649

For more information call (201) 599-2123 or email: [cstprogram@capp-usa.org](mailto:cstprogram@capp-usa.org)




**Centesimus Annus Pro Pontifice & The Catholic University of America**

**A CERTIFICATE PROGRAM IN CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING**

**Registration Form**

**October 30 - November 4, 2016**  
**Washington DC**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: First \_\_\_\_\_ Last \_\_\_\_\_ Suffix \_\_\_\_\_

Title: Mrs. \_\_\_\_ Miss. \_\_\_\_ Ms. \_\_\_\_ Sr. \_\_\_\_ Mr. \_\_\_\_ Dr. \_\_\_\_ Rev. \_\_\_\_ Rev. Mr. \_\_\_\_

Job Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Department: \_\_\_\_\_

Superior: \_\_\_\_\_ Bishop: \_\_\_\_\_

Diocese: \_\_\_\_\_

Work Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Work Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Home or Cell Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Person to contact in emergency Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Relation: \_\_\_\_\_

Any medical conditions, allergies to food, or impairments we need to be made aware of?  
 None  
 Yes, please explain \_\_\_\_\_

**Early Bird Registration – payment by September 30th \$1545.00 save \$150.00**  
**Final Deadline Registration – October 14th \$ 1695.00**  
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## SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES

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

### THE PROTECTION OF THE THEOTOKOS

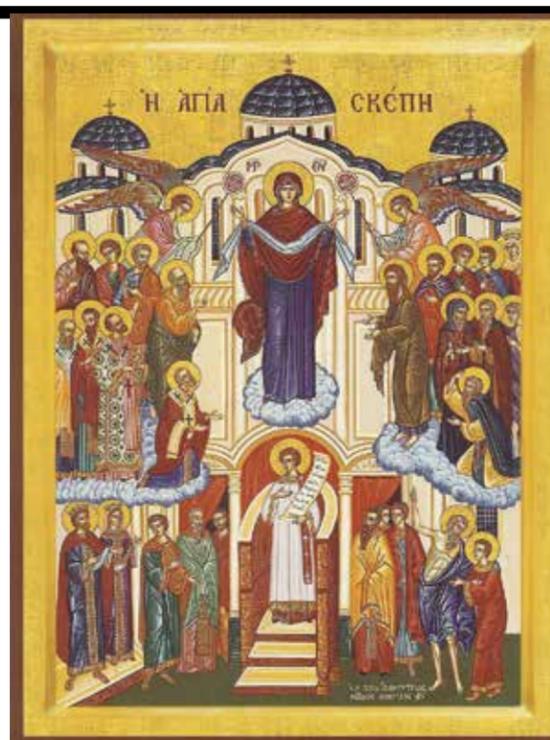
The events behind the feast of the Protection of the Theotokos are nine hundred years later than the New Testament, but the truth behind the feast can be found quite clearly in the pages of Scripture.

You have probably heard Saint John's account of Jesus' first miracle at the wedding feast at Cana in Galilee (John 2: 1-12) at a wedding but, whether it was your wedding or someone else's, you may well have been distracted. This passage is not read in the cycle of Sunday Gospels and, for that matter, it isn't read at the feast of the Protection of the Theotokos. But it's worth taking a closer look at Mary's role in this moment, the first time Jesus "revealed His glory" (John 2:11)

The problem emerges in verse 3: the hosts of the wedding have run out of wine. Notice how Mary takes the initiative to react to this problem without even being asked. Then notice how she goes about solving the problem: she tells Jesus, "They have no wine." Here, in a nutshell, is the whole truth about Mary's role as Protectress and Mother of the Church. She is sensitive to our needs, just as she was uniquely attentive to the potential shame for this anonymous young couple. Mary, whose pregnancy was misunderstood, who gave birth in a cave, became a refugee with

an infant in Egypt, and lived to see her Son rejected, condemned and crucified, is no stranger to human needs and worries. She sees them; she feels them; she takes the initiative to help us. She brings our needs to her Son, praying for us, praying with us. That's the very biblical idea behind the Protection of the Theotokos.

But that's not the end of it. Mary takes one more initiative. She says to the servants "Do whatever he (meaning Jesus) tells you" (verse 5). The miracle of water becoming wine only happens because the servants obey two commands that Jesus gives: to fill the jars with water and to draw some for the waiter in charge to taste (verses 7-8). Jesus' first miracle happened not only because Mary asked for it but also because human beings chose to cooperate with Jesus. The text makes clear that the servants followed Jesus' orders, step by step. "Do whatever He tells you" is Mary's advice to everyone who seeks her intercession and protection. Mary cannot ask Jesus to save us from ourselves. If we ask for Mary's intercession and protection, we must be prepared to obey her Son. Constantinople, which was saved from pagan attacks through Mary's protection in 626 (the Persians), and again in 718 (the Arabs), and again in the 9th century (the not-yet-Christian Slavs of Kyiv), fell to the Muslim Turks



in 1453. Something had changed in the interim, and it was not Mary's intercession or concern. A divided Church and compromised rulers may well have ceased to do what Jesus told them.

"Do whatever He tells you" is Mary's motherly advice to newlyweds, to kings and rulers, and to us all. In her own "yes" to the Archangel Gabriel (Luke 1:38), she teaches, as all mothers do, by example. **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.

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



## LIFE, LOVE, AND THE HUMAN PERSON

By Ann M. Koshute, MTS

### CULTURE CLASH

The other day, I was driving and noticed a decal commonly known as "the Jesus fish" on a car ahead of me. Early Christians often used the symbol of a fish – *ichthys*, in Greek – to identify each other as followers of Christ. It's meaning is multi-layered, but even today, Christians recognize it as a symbol of the Faith, even if they don't exactly know why. The *ichthys* I spotted on this car, however, was different but not unfamiliar. Protruding from the bottom of the fish were two short legs and feet. This was a "Darwin fish," referring to the man and his theory of evolution. It's meant as a swipe at Christians and belief in God's existence. There are lots of other "fish decal" variations on this theme, all statements on the silliness of belief in (the invisible) God over "empirically true" science. The "Darwin fish" and other like symbols aren't just disrespectful statements on religion, or attempts to "elevate man" over childish myths and stories about God. By reducing the human person to "material" that's

pre-determined by evolutionary processes, the symbol actually casts human persons as indistinguishable from everything else in creation. In other words, we're no big deal.

I don't mean to argue for or against the merits of the theory of evolution – belief in some aspects of which is not forbidden by the Church. What we must believe, however, is that God is "the Creator of heaven and earth," and of us. But not just "the cause"; His imprint is in each of us, and we exist because He loves us into being. What's amazing is that God invites us to cooperate with Him in the "coming to be" of each new person. We are the real flesh and blood of our parents, and really animated (given a spiritual, immortal soul) by God. No other creature (not even the angels) is like us. We are "begotten" in this partnership with the Creator, not "made" like products on an impersonal cosmic assembly line. Even in cases where an individual is not conceived in love (such as in the violence of rape or incest), or is "produced" in

a laboratory, he/she is loved and willed by God. In no instance is a person ever inferior, "defective," or a "mistake." Whether one is a zygote or an elderly man; someone with a physical or intellectual disability; always on the go or confined to bed; upstanding citizen or criminal in prison; no one is "less than" another.

The problem with the Darwin fish isn't simply disbelief in an "intelligent designer," but the rejection of a personal Creator who is intimately engaged in our lives and our being. The evidence is in the Incarnation, where God is "with us" because He "becomes one of us." That God creates us in His image and likeness is remarkable. That He loves us – each one, no exceptions – so much that He became a tiny zygote, grew into manhood, and offered His life for us - well, that's downright awesome.

October is Respect Life Month, designated so by the Bishops of the United States in 1972, one

year before abortion was legalized in our country. The Bishops knew that the battle for human life and dignity, a fight as old as Cain's murder of Abel, was being fought on many fronts. Watching the news or observing our own communities and families, it may seem that the human capacity to degrade another is limitless. The traditional pro-life "bookends" of abortion and euthanasia attack human personhood at its most vulnerable. But in between them are many volumes of degradation and violence that "read" the person as thing or instrument. The Culture of Death, as Saint John Paul II expressed it, manifests itself in the tendency to view some not as "persons" but objects: either useful or worthless. This Culture encompasses the death of the body – abortion, euthanasia, terror and war, the death penalty, etc. – and the death of the spirit – sexual and

economic exploitation, torture, religious persecution, bullying, etc. When persons are reduced to objects it becomes easier to dismiss – or even destroy – them when they become burdensome, unproductive, or cease being sources of pleasure.

Even with the power Death wields in our culture, and the frightening capacity with which humans can debase each other, our Faith teaches us the capacity for Love is much greater. Though Death puts up a good fight, Saint Paul reminds us that even "where sin increased, grace abounded all the more." (Romans 5:20). Where life and human dignity are threatened, there is all the more opportunity and capacity for each one of us to build and promote a Culture of Life in our words, actions, and prayers.

The Darwin fish attempts to show that we're smarter than a belief in an old bearded man in the sky. Instead, it shows that divorcing humanity from a Source that is personal – that is Love Himself – hasn't made us smarter, and certainly doesn't make us kinder, more thoughtful, and less violent toward each other. Deep in our hearts we know there is something more; Someone more. The personal God has written in us the desire for Love, Truth, Goodness, Beauty; in a word, for Him. To respect all Life, the incredible as well as the inconvenient, is to draw closer to God. For those who don't believe, who mock belief – or cynically display a Darwin fish – recognizing the goodness of Life is actually a step toward recognizing Him as the "Lord and giver of life." That is the triumph of Life over Death. **ECL**



## UNDERSTANDING ICONS

Father Joseph Bertha, Ph.D.

### SPIRITUAL WORK OF MERCY: BEARING WRONGS PATIENTLY; FORBEARANCE.

Installment 13 of 14

Out of all the works of mercy, the virtue of forbearance is perhaps the most under practiced. In order to understand this work of mercy the dictionary offers a clear and accurate description. Forbearance is defined and exhibited in our behavior by thirteen words in the English language: patience, resignation, restraint, tolerance, indulgence, long-suffering, moderation, self-control, leniency, temperance, mildness, lenity, and longanimity.

How can we see these virtues visualized in icons? When we turn to the sacred scriptures and the suffering and passion and death of Our Lord we can read how He typified all of these virtues as He journeyed his way to the hill of Golgotha. He kept his mouth silent as a sheep being led to the slaughter. Despite the anger, impatience, intolerance, irritability, shortness, and impetuosity of the high priest Caiaphas, the crowds, the Roman soldiers He did not utter one single word. This is evidenced by the depiction of his closed mouth in icons.

As these sinful accusations, curses, reproaches, even blasphemies were being hurled at the Son of God, not one word of condemnation was spoken by Our Blessed Lord. He exhibited restraint, long-suffering and the utmost self-control while enduring such humiliations.

When we look at Our Lord depicted on icons of the Cross in Byzantine art He is depicted in the state of peace, serenity and mildness. This is almost incomprehensible for us to understand. He who is sinless, is shown as the victim of sin. He who does not condemn anyone, shows the indulgence of patiently, suffering wrongs in order to allow the repentance of sinners.

Another scriptural model of forbearance is found in the life of Patriarch Joseph. Joseph was a victim of his brother's anger, intolerance, hatred of his family. Their disdain led to his being sold into Egypt as a slave, where he spent decades indentured. During his time in exile Joseph persevered in his faith and did not waver. His forbearance is evidenced by the names he selects for his two sons: Manasseh which means: "God has

made me forget all my hardship and all my fathers house," and Ephraim: "For God has made me fruitful in the land of my affliction." (Genesis 41:50-52) As my mother would say: "he took the lemons he received and made lemonade."

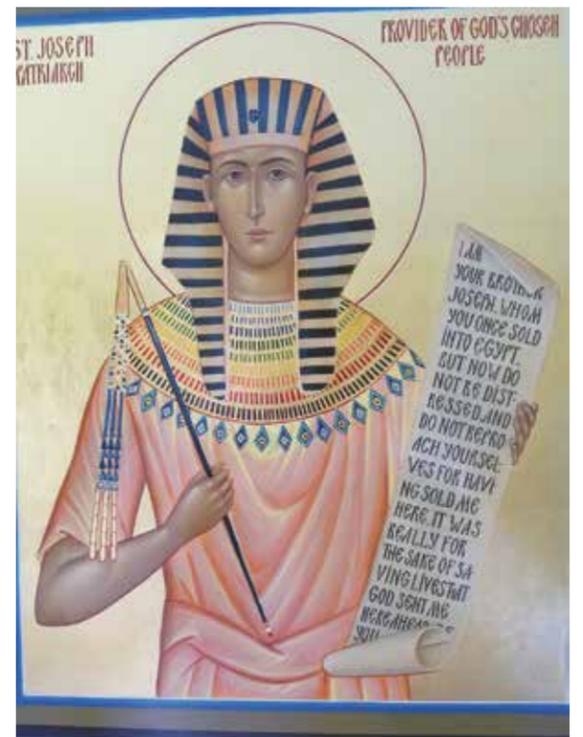
Both these names reflect the long-suffering, restraint and temperance of this Patriarch. He remained faithful to God, even though he was in Egypt with foreign gods and practices. His patience and resignation however is rewarded seven times seven fold. Joseph is elevated to second to Pharaoh and through his keen insight and perseverance he is able to save pyramids of grain in order to feed many during the famine.

Because Our God is a God of mercy, Joseph is allowed to feed his family when they come to him. However, there is another work of mercy at operation in this family dynamic. Joseph is allowed to instruct the ignorant (his brothers and family) by his leading them to admission of their guilt and expiation for their sins. This is wonderfully illustrated by Joseph's eight shedding of tears which occur as he is reunited with his family.

The forbearance of Joseph is magnificently visualized in the icon where he is portrayed as an Egyptian. His headdress is studded with the insignia of the imperial office. A multi-colored necklace portrays the multitude of graces including forbearance, temperance, restraint, etc., which he exhibited during his exile. Joseph reveals himself to his brothers with the words inscribed on a scroll he holds with the following text:

"I am your brother Joseph, who you sold into Egypt. And now do not be distressed, or angry with yourselves and do not reproach yourselves for having sold me here. It was really for the sake of saving lives that God sent me here ahead of you."

Saint John Chrysostom in his commentary on Genesis labels Joseph as the person with great equanimity for his restraint and holding back with great forbearance by forgiving all of the wrongs wrought on him by his own family. He writes:



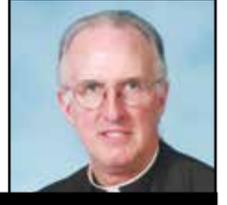
"Let us comfort those badly disposed to us: That servitude, Joseph is saying, procured for me this position. That sale brought me to this prominence. That distress proved the occasion of this honor for me. That envy produced this glory for me. Let us not simply hear this but also emulate it. In the same way let us comfort those badly disposed to us, relieving them of responsibility for what has been done to us and putting up with everything with great equanimity like this remarkable man." (Homilies on Genesis 64.29, page 292, *Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture*, Genesis 12-50, Volume II, Intervarsity Press, 2002)

Joseph's patience and forbearance is needed more than ever in our day and age. This work of mercy is particularly needed in our tumultuous family situations. We can imitate Joseph's long-suffering by persevering in our prayers, forgiving injuries, and acting with great temperance. Ultimately, this work of mercy is exemplified in Our Savior Jesus Christ, who patiently endured his passion, suffering and death on the cross, for the expiation of sins, and the salvation of sinners.

**ECL**

# CATECHETICAL REFLECTIONS

Father Robert F. Slesinski, Ph.D.



## MAN BEFORE GOD

*The Lived Body as Composite. Installment 15*

In our exposition of the Augustinian distinction between the “outward” and the “inward” man, the two can be construed as conflicting realities, but this is not really the case. From a cognitive standpoint, the accent put on sense perception, which is the mark of the “outward” man, places him or her on a lower plane than the one on which we encounter the “inward” man engaged in intellectual cognition, marveling at the truths that flow from meditation on the import “self-presence” has for each and every one of us. Yet, in taking into account the whole person, both sense perception and intellectual cognition are integrally related as they are equally cognitive acts of a knowing subject, each enjoying its own specific role in the wonder of human cognition.

In considering the respective modes of human cognition, the fact of the matter is that we are dealing with a human subject who is every bit a corporeal being. In a word, the human person is constituted by both body and soul (mind). What we have in human beinghood is the fundamental given of a lived body. This is, indeed, the “natural mystery” of the human person who enjoys a unity of spatially extended corporeal being along with an

incorporeal simple being, knowing no spatial extension. Thus, what obtains in human beinghood is an essential unity in and through a principled duality. The mystery of human beinghood is most certainly a given in human experience, but it defies all human explanation.

All materialist philosophies, on the other hand, are content to render the human soul as some sort of epiphenomenon of the body with the body ruling the soul and not vice versa. But it is precisely the soul that enables bodies to be living, and not some mechanistic interaction of chemical and electrical properties, as it were.

How can we describe a body, philosophically speaking? A body is an entity enjoying spatial extension and consists of greater and lesser parts all extended in space. In addition, bodies are characterized by locomotion; they can move from place to place. Most critically, in their spatial extension, bodies require the three dimensions of length, breadth, and height, the last dimension being crucial as a mathematical line or plane would never be perceptible without height. Bodies, moreover, are never simple, but are always manifold; they are

made of divisible and measurable parts.

Non-bodily, i.e., spiritual entities, on the other hand, are never contained in space; they are rather intelligible objects that are not perceptible by the five physical senses. How can we describe our minds from a physical point of view? And they are not reducible to our brains, even if these serve as the physical condition supporting mental activity. And, then, there are so many other intelligible entities governing our lives like justice, charity, mercy, peace, longanimity, benignity, and joy. You cannot touch love nor can you locate it physically in either the arm or foot, even if symbolically we describe it as being a matter of the heart as a central aspect of our human being. Notable too is the fact that our bodies are never external to our souls; they are intrinsically interrelated, the bodily senses participating in the excellence of our souls, the bodily organs serving as the instruments of fully human activities, such as writing and speaking.

In a moving passage in his City of God, Saint Augustine stirringly writes how the sense organs and other parts of the body are so arranged and formed so as to serve the spiritual ends of the rational soul. We read (XXII, 24):

Moreover, even in the body, which is something we have in common with the brute creation... even here what evidence we find of the goodness of God, of the providence of the mighty Creator! Are not the sense organs and the other parts of that body so arranged and the form and shape and size of the whole body so designed as to show that it was created as the servant to the rational soul? For example: we observe how the irrational animals generally have their faces turned towards the ground; but man's posture is erect, facing towards the sky to admonish him to fix his thoughts on heavenly things. Then the marvelous mobility with which his tongue and hands are endowed is so appropriate, so adapted for speaking and writing and for the accomplishment of a multitude of arts and crafts. And is not this sufficient indication that a body of this kind was designed as an adjunct of the soul?

Augustine's query only highlights the marvelous composite of body and soul that the human being is. OMG, the Provident Creator is speaking to us and calling us even in our very bodies and souls, a truth for us to ponder, indeed! **ECL**

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Icon of the Evangelist Saint Luke

The celebration of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross on September 14 marks a turning point in the cycle of our Gospel readings. It is popularly known as the “Lucan Leap.” In order to compute the number of Sundays before the Lenten Cycle and not to repeat several readings prior to Christmas, following holy Theophany and the beginning of the Great Fast, the continuous Gospel readings from Saint Luke of the 18th week after Pentecost begin on the Monday after the Feast of the Exaltation. This year there is a week’s difference between the Epistle and the Gospel readings until the beginning of January. The Epistle readings do not change.

Saint Luke’s Gospel in our Scriptures is third in line after Matthew and Mark with that of Saint John completing the series of four. Not much is actually known with certainty about the location of its composition. Some scholars suggest Greece while some manuscripts mention Alexandria or Macedonia. More contemporary scholars also

## SEASONAL REFLECTIONS

Monsignor John. T. Sekellick, JCL



### THE GOSPEL OF SAINT LUKE

cite Ephesus, Caesarea or even Rome. A study of the Gospel shows its author was a person of fine literary ability, a physician, an artist and a companion of Saint Paul. His observation about the suffering of Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane would indicate some medical background: “His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down upon the ground” (22:44), not mentioned in the other three Gospels.

Saint Luke is also the author of the Acts of the Apostles. Both books are directed to a certain “Theophilus” perhaps a man of high rank or office. Nonetheless, the Gospel indirectly is intended for non-Jewish readers, namely Gentile, pagan converts. In Christian art, Luke is given the sign of a winged ox, symbolic of the ancient Temple sacrifices in Jerusalem. Luke’s Gospel begins and ends with references to Jerusalem.

The role of the Holy Spirit in Jesus’ ministry is emphasized by Luke. Both John the Baptist and his parents were filled with the Holy Spirit as was Simeon at Jesus’ presentation in the Temple. Jesus begins His ministry filled with the power of the Spirit and predicts the descent of the Spirit on His disciples.

Luke includes a number of parables to show Jesus’ concern for our human condition, particularly the poor and the marginalized (women, children, outcasts and criminals). These stories reverse any usual understanding of worldly happiness such as a despised tax collector who is closer to God than a self-righteous Pharisee, a disgraced son who is nearer to his father’s heart

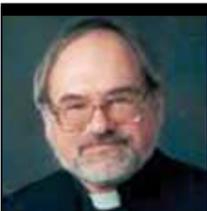
than his model elder brother, and a rich man unaware of Lazarus’ starving at his very door.

The Gospel shows Jesus as a Man of prayer, especially at critical moments. Jesus regularly would go off to a mountain to pray. Only Luke uses the word agony regarding His prayer in Gethsemane.

Luke’s Gospel shows God at work in human history, making God’s plan for our salvation evident to his readers. Central to this plan were Jesus’ life, death, Resurrection and Ascension which were for the poor and needy events of great hope and the offer of powerful blessings especially the promise of everlasting life.

Among some great events, Saint Luke records the Annunciation, the birth of Jesus, His baptism and subsequent temptation, the Transfiguration, solemn entry into Jerusalem, the Mystical Supper, trial, crucifixion and resurrection, including the only account of the two disciples walk to Emmaus and their encounter with the Resurrected Lord.

Some well-known passages are the greeting of the angel at the Annunciation (“Hail, Mary, full of grace....”), Mary’s song (the “Magnificat”), the story of the shepherds and the angels in Bethlehem, the parable of the Good Samaritan, the dinner with Martha and Mary, the parable of the Publican and the Pharisee and the parable of the prodigal son. Over the course of the next several months, we will hear these accounts from the Gospel of Saint Luke for our reflection and edification. **ECL**



## THE BYZANTINE LITURGY

By Archpriest David Petras, SEOD

### WISDOM

“Wisdom” is one of the words frequently said by the deacon. It is an exclamation, not a full sentence, that introduces the Entrance Hymn, the Prokeimenon, the Epistle, the Alleluia verses, the Gospel, the Creed, and as a general word in the dismissal to describe the whole Divine Liturgy. It points out that all these words have meaning which is not merely superficial, but which go to the very heart of our human lives and the created world in which we live them. What is wisdom? Webster’s dictionary gives a definition: “accumulated philosophic or scientific learning, knowledge, the ability to discern inner qualities and relationships, insight, good sense, judgment, generally accepted belief.” In our Christian faith, however, I would have to say that all these meanings are not enough and that wisdom means something more.

Wisdom is a central idea in all of Sacred Scripture. In the evening, we celebrate Vespers starting by chanting Psalm 103. This psalm is a celebration of the Creator who has brought everything that there is into being. We remember God as the day comes to an end and we thank him for

all He has done for us, because, “How many are your works, O Lord! In wisdom, you have made them all. (Psalm 103:24) In the Polyeleos Psalms, which are sung on important feasts in Matins, the morning service of the church, we say: “O give thanks to the Lord, for He is good,

for His love endures forever . . . whose wisdom it was that made the skies, for His love endures forever. (Psalm 135:1.5)” Wisdom is even depicted as a living person, “Wisdom built her house, and she supported it with seven pillars. (Proverbs 9:1)” She prepares a banquet and invites us to partake of wisdom, “Come, eat my bread and drink the wine I mixed for you . . . (Proverbs 9:5)” The ancient people always mixed wine and water. This was seen as a foreshadowing of the holy Eucharist.

Often, when people try to present a rational argument for the existence of God, they appeal to what is called “intelligent design.” The whole universe is so complicated and seems to be constructed to support life, so that this could not have happened by accident, but there must be an intelligent and willing being who has planned it

so. The Christian, however, does not need rational arguments. That there is wisdom in all creation is evident, “For what can be known about God is evident to them, because God made it evident to them. Ever since the creation of the world, His invisible attributes of eternal power and divinity have been able to be understood and perceived in what He has made. (Romans 1:19-20)” Wisdom as understanding, meaning and knowledge is the very form of the universe made by God, so that only “the fool has said in his heart: ‘There is no God above.’ (Psalm 13:1)”

We must go a step further. Saint Paul tells us in his first letter to the Corinthians, “You are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God, as well as righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, (1 Corinthians 1:30)” and again, “we proclaim Christ crucified . . . Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. (1 Corinthians 1:24)” The meaning of all creation is every word spoken by Christ, the Word of God, and by whose saving action of the cross and the resurrection, is wisdom in its deepest sense, the very reason by which we are alive in God, our Savior

and Redeemer. The Church which was centered in the city of Constantinople, which was and remains the highest expression of the Christian faith entrusted to the human race, recognized this when it built its greatest church and dedicated it to Christ, naming it (in Greek) "Haghia Sophia," "Holy Wisdom."

All of this is because our faith is established on the wisdom of God. This is how we know that God loves us, and has provided for us in ways that we understand only by divine grace. What is the "wisdom of God." It is Christ himself, who we receive in Holy Communion, singing, "we have seen the true light." It is Christ who has taught us the way a believer should live, and then sent

the Holy Spirit into our minds and hearts, that we might know and understand and love as Christ has taught us.

The wisdom of God, however, is not human wisdom. Saint Paul explains that quite clearly. The wisdom of God is seen in the foolishness of the death on the Cross, and the power of God is seen in the love Jesus showed us in laying down his life for us, His friends. Saint Paul writes to the Corinthians, "For Jews demand signs and the Greeks look for wisdom, but we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, but to those who are called, Jews and Greeks alike, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.. (1 Corinthians 1:22-24)"

This must be the way we live also, not seeking power over others, but sacrificing ourselves for the love of the other. Saint Paul is also clear on that, "Have among yourselves the same attitude that is also yours in Christ Jesus ... He emptied himself ... He humbled himself, becoming obedient to death ... (Philippians 2:5.6.8) This is not false worldly wisdom, where we are taught to seize power for ourselves and to lord it over others. However, it is the way that the world will be saved and glorified, for God's love is the glory of all creation. This is how we know that there is a God, for "God is love" (1 John 4:8) and "so loved the world that He gave His only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life. (John 3:16)" **ECL**



## SCHOOL OF PRAYER

Father G. Scott Boghossian

### THE PRAYER OF SUFFERING

**W**e have experienced the amazing power of prayer. We have friends and family who probably wouldn't be alive today if it was not for God answering our prayer. We've seen our fallen away loved ones return to the Church and the sacraments. Through prayer, people triumph over life threatening illnesses, even after the doctor told them there was little hope for recovery. There is no doubt that God does hear and answer our prayers as He promised to do. Nevertheless, there are times when we don't get what we ask for, and we have to bear our illnesses, sorrows, and tragedies with faith and patience. We must believe that God knows what He is doing, and that there is a good reason why we must suffer and endure. Once we are in heaven, we will understand our suffering in light of the infinite wisdom of God, but for now we must "walk by faith and not by sight" (2 Cor. 5:7).

When we experience hardships we can pray the prayer of suffering. The prayer of suffering consists in bearing our trials patiently, knowing that God is accomplishing His purpose in us. Jesus says, "In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world" (Jn. 16:33). Saints Paul and Barnabas went to Lystra, Iconium, Antioch, "saying that through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God" (Acts 14:22). Saint Athanasius tells us that "the path of the saints is one full of troubles." Saint Mark the Ascetic teaches us that if we accept involuntary sufferings with patience, they bring us to repentance and deliver us from everlasting

ing punishment. Christ, the Apostles, and the Fathers help us understand why God does not allow us to go through life in continual comfort and ease. We need trials to grow in holiness and to achieve our eternal salvation.

Suffering teaches us humility. Trials reveal our lack of virtue. We might think we are patient and gentle people until God sends us a difficult person whom we simply cannot stand. Then we see that we are not as loving and patient as we supposed. Lord, have mercy!

Tribulations disentangle our hearts from worldly things. We might have thought that money, or pleasure, or popularity would fulfill us. Then we got what we wanted and found ourselves unsatisfied. Getting what we wanted only multiplied our troubles. If we get a new car, we'll be worried about it getting damaged in the parking lot of the grocery store. We were happier with our old car! He wanted that boat, but now that he owns it, he realizes all the work that goes into maintaining it. What a burden! Only God satisfies.

By bearing trials patiently we can do penance. Our confessor or spiritual father won't give a permission or a blessing to fast for forty days, or sleep on the ground, or spend all night in prayer, but Divine Providence will send us all the penance we need if we only bear our daily sufferings with faith and patience.

Suffering compels us to pray. Some of us would never pray at all if we did not find ourselves in

some painful circumstance. And how many people have returned to God and the Church in a spirit of faith and repentance because of a problem they could not manage on their own?

The prayer of suffering is rewarded by God. Saint James writes, "Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial, for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life, which God has promised to those who love him" (Jas 1:12). The Lord Jesus says, "Rejoice when you suffer persecution, for great is your reward in heaven" (Mt. 5:12). By patient suffering we are rewarded with an increase of grace in this life, and a higher degree of glory in heaven.

As the sculptor fashions a block of marble into a masterpiece - with a hammer, a chisel, and a file, so by the trials of life the Divine Sculptor forms us into the masterpiece He created us to be. As the fiery furnace purifies molten gold and causes all the impurities to rise to the surface, so hardships purify our souls. As a valuable pearl is formed by a grain of sand or other irritant that gets inside the oyster, so the irritating and frustrating events of life, borne patiently, create in us a precious Christ-like spirit.

Yes, our God does answer our prayers, but even when He does not give us precisely that for which we ask, we know He gives us what we need. At times, we need to pray the prayer of suffering. Its benefits are innumerable. **ECL**

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# SPIRITUAL REFLECTIONS

Father Lewis Rabayda

## IDENTITY IN GOD

Who are we? What makes us who we are and how we think and how we perceive ourselves? Am I really me, and can I reshape myself? These are important questions for what we are dealing with in the current world. How we answer these questions is telling of what we believe our origin is.

Today there are many different identity ideologies being fought for and even being taught to our young people. Young people are told that they have a choice of who they are and that if they feel a certain way, then they should explore that path and see if it “fits” them. This whole concept begs the question of who we are and who we were made to be. It tells young people that they have not been made a specific person, but that they have the power to choose what type of person they are based on their fleeting emotions. These emotions can come and go as we all know, and given the delayed maturity of our youth because of too many protections and with underestimating their ability to be responsible, these emotions can last well into their twenties and effect dangerous life habits.

Yes, we are each individual, we are each a special person, but it is important to note that we are special because of how God made us. God has implanted in each of us our own specific set of traits, and anyone with children would know that one child can be drastically different from the next, even though the parents are the same and the living situation is the same, each child is his or her own person. God made us, but that does not always mean that He has formed us through our whole lives. The formation of a young person comes from their parents first, then hopefully their church community, then their school, friends, and society. If the voice of God is in all of these influences, then we should not have to worry, because we would not only be made by God, but also formed by Him throughout our lives. However, as we see in many stages of history, this is not the case. Indeed Christ Himself tells us that the “ruler of this world” is opposed to Him, even though Christ has conquered that ruler, Satan.

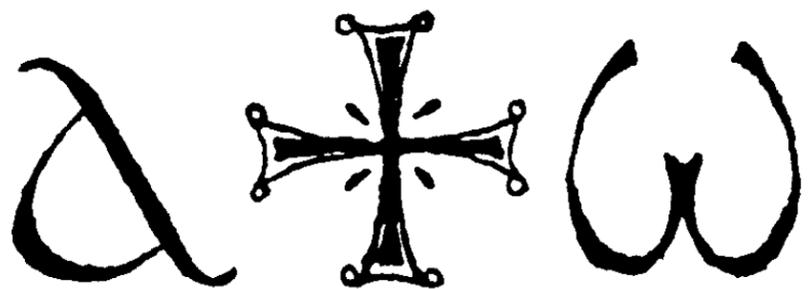
The “ruler of this world” has indeed shaped society to himself and to his deviation and disobedience to God’s plan for our lives. God’s plan

is that we overcome the temptations of this world, and that we consciously choose to follow His Son, Jesus Christ, so that we will be found worthy of His Kingdom of Heaven and rejoice with Him and praise Him for eternity. This is our end, this is why we were baptized, this is why each of us is a beloved son and daughter, loved by God, and this is why He gives us these commandments so that we will know true joy and happiness, not the fleeting pleasures of this world and the pain they cause.

If we do not see God as the source of our existence, as the source of our being, and see that He has implanted in us His divine spirit, then we will not be able to see our true self. If we cannot see our true self, the self that God has created and tried to form through His Church and others whom He has sent, then it is too easy for us to create a differ-

ent self void of God’s characteristics. When we embark on this journey of pride and disobedience, we reject God’s plan for our lives, and we embrace chaos as a virtue. If unchecked and unrepented, chaos has one end, eternal death.

So who are we? What makes us who we are? Do we have the ability to completely reshape ourselves into something contrary to our creation? Each of us is a beloved child of God; made by God. God offers us through His earthly institution of the Catholic Church and through His messengers His plan for our lives so that we will undoubtedly know who we were made to be, not who we think we want to be because of our disordered emotions and desires. **BCL**



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](http://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](http://www.njcathconf.com).

## UPCOMING EVENTS FOR OCTOBER

Eparchial and Parish Events  
*Slava Isusu Christu! Slava na v’iki!*

### Eastern Catholic Life

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| <p>1 Protection of the Theotokos<br/><i>Solemn Holyday</i></p> <p>2 125th Anniversary Celebration<br/>Saint Mary Parish, Scranton, PA<br/><i>Hierarchical Divine Liturgy</i><br/>3 p.m.</p> <p>9 New Jersey Syncellate Wedding<br/>Jubilarians Celebration<br/>Saint Mary, Hillsborough, NJ<br/><i>Hierarchical Divine Liturgy</i><br/>3 p.m.</p> <p>10 Columbus Day<br/><i>Civic holiday* Chancery closed</i></p> | <p>16 Father Walter Ciszek Day<br/><i>2 p.m. Liturgy with Bishop Kurt as homilist. Saint Casimir Church, Shenandoah, PA</i></p> <p>Blessing of Blessed Miriam Teresa Demjanovich Shrine<br/><i>Holy Family Chapel, Convent Station, NJ, 3 p.m.</i></p> <p>30 125th Anniversary Celebration<br/>Saint Mary Parish, Mahanoy City, PA<br/><i>Hierarchical Divine Liturgy</i><br/>3 p.m.</p> |
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