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Getting to know God

RETREAT MASTER URGES DEACONS TO LOOK IN MIRROR

by Deacon Raymond Zadzilko

Deacons and wives of the Archdiocese of Pittsburgh and the Eparchy of Parma gathered April 16-18 at the Antiochian Village in Latrobe, Pa. for their annual retreat. They were joined by Seminarians Deacon William Rupp and Subdeacon Diodoro Mendoza, who were on retreat for their upcoming ordinations.

The retreat master was Reverend Philaret Littlefield, pastor of St. George Melkite Church Milwaukee, Wis., and former Hegumen of Christ Our Savior Monastery, Steubenville, Ohio. The theme of his presentation, and his challenge to his listeners, was to live a life pleasing to God.

Father Littlefield expressed our current predicament as one of a broken relationship between ourselves and the Lord. On our journey of faith we should not make the mistake of pleasing people or even ourselves but to take the highest path, to please God. We need to get to know God, to develop our relationship with Him in the present and, ultimately, to renounce our own will in favor of God's commandments. Change is required not by our will but God's will. Obedience to the Lord is based not upon fear of punishment or hope of reward but upon doing good for the sake of good. To be closer to God we must be closer to our neighbor.

Although it is difficult, if not almost impossible, Father Littlefield admitted we need to distance ourselves from worldly

Deacons continued on page 3



Michael Harlan Photography

Hundreds filled the Cathedral of St. John the Baptist in Munhall, Pa. for the April 18 choral presentation "He Granted Life: Songs of Pascha," hosted by the Archdiocesan Choir, whose members were joined by four choirs from Eastern Orthodox churches in the Greater Pittsburgh area. *Story and photos on pages 6-7.*

Under construction: 18 new 'domestic churches'

PRE-CANA COUPLES LEARN GOD'S PLAN

by Sister Marion Dobos, OSB

The daily presence of Christ can make a difference in a marriage. Eighteen engaged couples in the Archdiocese came together in Munhall, Pa. during the months of February and March at the Cathedral of St. John the Baptist to learn about God's plan for

marriage.

Father Jim Hess, OCarm spoke to the couples about the journey through which they can grow closer to one another and to God. He emphasized the spiritual component of

Pre-Cana continued on page 2

Another Chapter in Basilian Sisters' history

OSBM LEADERSHIP RE-ELECTED

The weekend of April 16-18 found the Uniontown Province of the Order of Sisters of St. Basil the Great (OSBM) meeting for a multi-dimensional purpose: to review goals and shared vision; to assess spiritual, apostolic, financial and administrative momentum, and to elect leadership. In monastic communities, this special gathering, which takes place every five years, is known as a Provincial Chapter - formal times of meeting for the objectives outlined above.

Preparation for the 2010 Chapter began two years in advance of the chosen date and was in the hands of a Chapter Preparatory Committee, Comprised of Sister Monica Husovich, Chairperson, Sister Susan Harvey, Sister Susan Sisko and Sister Barbara Swindells. Mary Ann Pobicki, a planning

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Sister Monica Husovich, OSBM

Sister Seraphim addresses the Sisters of St. Basil at the beginning of their Provincial Chapter, April 16.

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MISSION

The mission of **The Byzantine Catholic World** is to teach the Gospel message in the rich tradition of the Byzantine Catholic Church; to encourage people to reflect the image of Christ in everyday activities of life; to offer spiritual formation through changing times; and to celebrate community among Byzantine Catholics around the Archeparchy of Pittsburgh and throughout the Metropolitan Church.

Pre-Cana

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marriage, telling the couples that prayer and reliance on God is absolutely essential.

“Ideas for Creating a Sacred Space to Make Your Home a Domestic Church” was a presentation in the beautiful cathedral given by Deacons Dennis Prestash and John Petrus. It was also a wonderful learning opportunity for some of the participants who were not well-acquainted with the Byzantine Church and its iconography.

During their engagement, couples should work toward developing a clear and comprehensive understanding of



each person’s expectations, hopes and plans for marriage. Father Joseph Raptosh, Adjunct Professor of Pastoral Theology at SS. Cyril and Methodius Seminary, spoke to the couples about the importance of honest communication and trust. He emphasized that they need to prepare for a marriage, not just a wedding, and to be aware of the challenges of marriage.

The myths of “happily ever after” or “love conquers all” can fade quickly after the wedding. Psychiatrist Dr. Sharon De Lauro Petrus facilitated discussions with the couples on the reality of marriage and the elements needed for a healthy marriage.

A financial partnership in marriage is crucial. Mr. Jack Miller, Development Consultant for the Byzantine Catholic Seminary provided input on how to formulate a budget. He distributed worksheets and tempered his presentation with the fact that a couple must spend less than what they earn if they are to be financially fit.

Mary Ann Newhouse, Counselor and Specialist for Natural



Engaged couples of the Archeparchy gather with Archpriest Dennis Bogda (*back row, left*) for a group photo following Pre-Cana instruction at St. John the Baptist Cathedral Saturday, March 20. *Photos courtesy of Sister Marion Dobos, OSB*

Family Planning (NFP), works for the (Latin) Diocese of Greensburg in the Office of Family Life. She acquainted the couples with the Catholic Church’s teaching on morality in marriage. The Archeparchy of Pittsburgh Office of Religious Education provided a packet containing materials from the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) and the Diocese of Pittsburgh which address the topics of NFP, contraception and cohabitation.

The Ritual of Marriage in the Byzantine Catholic Church speaks about the promises of God’s presence that raises marriage to a newer and higher level. The entire service is a prayer to God to receive the couple’s gift of love, to bless it and perfect it through the Holy Spirit. Marriage is to be a living witness to the love of Christ for His Church. Archpriest Dennis



M. Bogda, Rector of St. John the Baptist Cathedral guided the couples through the Ritual of Marriage in the cathedral (*above*). Facial expressions of the couples become very serious during this part of the program, and the words of St. Paul begin to become a reality: “For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.” (Ephesians 5:31)

Father Dennis explained the threefold meaning of the Crowning — first is the state of becoming the king and queen of their miniature church, the domestic church, which is beginning to form. The second meaning is that of representing the crowns of martyrdom, who are witnesses to the faith and so too must they be witnesses in their own marriage to succeed. Third and finally, receiving the reward — the crowns of Victory — the final reward after leading a full and holy life according to the will of the Lord.

Coming in together as a couple, and not as with the father walking down the aisle — this is actually part of the Engagement Ceremony. The ring is worn on the *right* hand, symbolizing the hand of the glory of the kingdom of God, and not on the left, as is widely and popularly believed that wearing the ring on the left hand is related to a direct line to the heart.

At the conclusion of the program, Deacon Dennis Prestash, with the help of his wife, Patty, who serve the Hawk Run, Pa. parish of St. John the Baptist, distributed certificates signed by Archbishop Basil to all of the couples.

Evaluations offered by the couples for this year’s program expressed deep gratitude for the experience and an eagerness to continue their preparation on the parish level.

Couples of the Archeparchy of Pittsburgh planning to get married in 2011 are urged to check the Office of Religious Education page on the Archeparchy’s website, www.archeparchy.org in the near future for the 2011 Pre-Cana Program dates. ■

Deacons

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concern and values. The world and its priorities distract us from our goal of acting for the Lord. Taking small steps, we should intensify our spiritual life in ordinary ways. We as Christians should regard God as essential in our affairs. He is always watching us and hoping that we will do the work that we are invited to undertake in His world. We should not be self-limiting or attempt to be self-sufficient. Our heavenly journey is one of the Church community, *koinonia*, in which we encourage each other and are available to one another recognizing each other's gifts from the Lord. Ultimately, what we are called to accept is total commitment to the Lord's will, toward sanctifying all things in our stewardship and relieving the sufferings of the needy.

We first need to look in the mirror and see sin's distraction from God's will in our lives. We should not be satisfied with what we are. Humankind was banished from the Garden of Eden into the realm of sin, that is, the world. We have the assurance of salvation in Jesus Christ but each of us should move along in life as a pilgrim toward our destination in the assembly of the Apostles in heaven.

During their stay at the Antiochian Village, the participants had the opportunity to visit Niko Chocheli's exhibit "Spirit and Whimsy." Mr. Chocheli, born in the Republic of Georgia, is an acclaimed artist, illustrator and iconographer. His colorful and expressive paintings have graced the pages of numerous Orthodox children's books.

The weekend was an opportunity to strengthen fellowship in the community in faith, as retreatants worshipped together at Compline, Hours, Vespers and Divine Liturgy, and also spent time renewing friendships. ■

Chapter

continued from page 1

consultant, worked with the committee and with the Sisters' community at large in this aspect of preparation. Ms. Pobicki also acted as facilitator during the actual Chapter.

After a day and a half of addressing the agenda items, the Sisters met in the Monastery Chapel for prayer before the elections. Sister Seraphim Olsafsky was elected Provincial for a second term. She is joined by Sister Carol Petrasovich, who will serve as Assistant for another term. In addition, Sister Ruth Plante, Sister Barbara Jean Mihalchick, and Sister Susan Sisko were elected to serve on the Council. All of the elected officials have served previously in administration: Sister Ruth served as Provincial for two terms, and Sister Barbara Jean and Sister Susan served on the council in the previous five years. All five Sisters bring a wealth of experience to their service to the Sisters' community, each having been active in a number



Sister Monica Husovitch, OSBM

Pictured following their installation are (left to right) Sister Susan Sisko, Sister Barbara Jean Mihalchick, Sister Seraphim, Provincial; Sister Ruth Plante, and Sister Carol Petrasovich.

of ministries before being called to leadership.

When the entire community meets, there is always an air of excitement and added energy in the monastery, and even more so when there are elections. With joy, the community participated in the installation of

the new officials, offering their congratulations and gathering for a festive meal afterwards. Beginning another chapter in their history, the Sisters of St. Basil, with their elected leadership, look forward to continuing their service to God and to the Church. ■



Gathering in retreat at Antiochian Village in Latrobe, Pa., deacons of the Archeparchy of Pittsburgh and Eparchy of Parma and their wives spent the April 16-18 weekend with retreat master Reverend Philaret Littlefield (center). Photos courtesy of Sandy Simko



Subdeacon Diodoro Mendoza (left) and Deacon Will Rupp (right) spent time in preparation for their upcoming ordinations with retreat master Father Philaret at the Antiochian Village.



Deacon Edward Kleinguett of St. John Chrysostom Church in Houston, Texas assists at the Divine Liturgy during the retreat.



Enjoying social time are (left to right) Deacons Paul Boboige, Paul Pipta, and Paul Lachta, Father Philaret Littlefield and Deacon Paul Simko.

Plenty of participation at Perryopolis parish

EVENTS KEEP ST. NICHOLAS CHURCH COOKIN'



The members of St. Nicholas Byzantine Catholic Church in Perryopolis, Pa. have been quite busy organizing and holding several springtime events. The Soup and Sandwich fundraiser Sunday March 14 (*left*) was both successful and delicious; the Easter Egg Hunt on Palm Sunday, March 28 (*middle*) was enjoyed by all, especially by the children of the parish; parishioners pitched in to make the Thomas Sunday Brunch April 11 (*bottom*) well-attended and memorable.

Pastored by Father Robert Halus, St. Nicholas Church is located about 40 miles south of Pittsburgh. ■



The Byzantine Catholic Archeparchy
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

DIRECTORY ASSISTANCE

To find information on-line for churches in the Archeparchy, go to www.archeparchy.org and click on "Directory of Parishes"

Father Ed says 'Fill 'er up!'

AVELLA PARISHIONERS HONORS SHEPHERD

In recognition of his service, especially during the "Year for Priests," the parish family of St. John the Baptist Church in Avella, Pa. recently honored their pastor, Father Ed Lucas. Ordained to the presbyterate (priesthood) on December 6, 1961 – the Feast of St. Nicholas – Father Ed hails from St. Nicholas Church in Yonkers, N.Y.

In addition to serving St. John's, Father Ed also serves the parishioners of Assumption

of the Mother of God Church in Weirton, W.Va., a 30-mile round trip from one parish to the other, traveling across Pennsylvania and West Virginia state lines. With that distance in mind, an appropriate token of thanks and appreciation was presented to Father Ed on behalf of the parish. St. John's parishioner and Altar Society president Marge Marker, along with several parish children made the presentation - a well-deserved gas card. ■



Linda Koryna

Presenting Father Ed Lucas with a gift in appreciation of his service to St. John the Baptist Church in Avella, Pa. are Altar Society President Marge Marker and parish children (*left to right*) Brandon Kowcheck, Julianne Rush, Keith Hardt, Lilianna Hardt, and K.J. Rush.

'Double nickels' for New Salem administrator

FATHER JEROME BOTSKO FETED FOR 55TH

In the "Year for Priests," or any other year for that matter, parishioners of St. Mary Assumption Church know that Father Jerome Botsko is special. Expressing appreciation and affection for their priest (who is administrator of their New Salem, Pa.



Father Jerome Botsko

parish in addition to being pastor of St. Nicholas Church in Brownsville), a Happy Birthday dinner was held in his honor Sunday, April 25.

Father Jerome turned 55 on April 15 – yes, on 'tax day' – and now is eligible to officially order from the 'seniors' menu

in a number of restaurants! A colorful and delicious array of decadently decorated cupcakes was presented in honor of both his birthday and his 12 years of spiritual guidance at St. Mary's, which is about 10 miles south of Brownsville.

"Oh, he's such a good priest!" said parishioner Helen Hanzely, who reports that many fellow members of St. Mary's share her sentiment. "He works so hard – God bless him and keep him forever!" Indeed, may God grant Father Jerome many blessed and happy years. ■

Altar server earns rank of Eagle Scout

MEMBER OF GREENSBURG, PA. PARISH

Alexander W. Barber, son of Steven and Valerie Barber of Jeannette, Pa., recently passed his Board of Review and achieved the rank of Eagle Scout, the highest rank in Boy Scouting. Alex, a member of Troop 226 in Jeannette, has been active with the Boy Scouts for 12 years. For his project, he organized and recruited volunteers for a children's game and library information booth at the July 2009 Jeannette Community Days event. All proceeds benefited the Jeannette Public Library.



Alex Barber

A senior at Jeannette High School, Alex is a member of the school's marching band in which he served as drumline captain this year. He also is a member of the jazz and concert bands, stage crew, and Alpha-Hi-Y Club, and is employed as a dishwasher at Persichetti's Restaurant in Jeannette. Alex is a parishioner and altar

server at St. Nicholas Byzantine Catholic Church, Greensburg, where Fr. Regis Dusecina is pastor.

Alex has been accepted to Youngstown State University in Youngstown, Ohio, where he will major in law enforcement, as well as join the YSU Marching Band. He plans to become a state trooper. ■

Liming merits 'Light is Life'

EASTERN CHRISTIAN SCOUTING AWARD

Louis Liming of Lordstown, Ohio recently was awarded the 2010 'Light is Life' award. The program was designed for Boy Scouts by the National Catholic Committee on Scouting, in cooperation with the Bishops of Eastern Catholic Churches in the U.S. The overall goal of the 'Light is Life' religious emblem program is to bring about in the Scout, through his Eastern Christian scouting experience, a deeper awareness of his share in faith-life.



Scout Louis Liming receives the 'Light is Life' award from Rev. Terrence Hazel.

The award was presented to Louis on Saturday, April 17 by Reverend Terrence Hazel, Chaplain of the [Youngstown] Diocesan Catholic Committee on Scouting during an awards ceremony and mass at St. Columba Cathedral, Youngstown, Ohio. Louis is an altar server and member of

St. Michael Byzantine Catholic Church in Newton Falls, Ohio, where Very Reverend Richard Lambert is administrator. He is a member of Boy Scouts of America Troop 4020, Lordstown, and is an eighth grade student at Lordstown High School. ■



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'The worst and best week of my life'

ICONOGRAPHER SHARES PERSONAL, SPIRITUAL INSIGHTS

How can we diminish our anxiety and learn instead to trust the Holy Spirit? Try writing an icon.

This is the empowering message that iconographer Amanda Singel of Kennedy Township, Pa. shared with parishioners and ECF students when she spoke at St. Stephen Byzantine Catholic Church in North Huntingdon, Pa. on Sunday, April 18. While she shared many practical insights about her vocation, Amanda also emphasized how the challenges of writing an icon ultimately forced her to realize both new levels of confidence and dependence on the Holy Spirit.

Raised Byzantine Catholic, Amanda was always fascinated with icons. About nine years ago, while attending the University of Pittsburgh to study Fine Arts, her fascination led her to attend a week-long iconography workshop at St. Paul's monastery in Pittsburgh (South Side), Pa. She always refers to this week as "the worst and best week of my life." As Amanda told parishioners, the workshop brought to her attention how perhaps the toughest barrier

to chasing our dreams is our own lack of self-confidence. But, as her teacher observed, her "personality changed that week ... as I let go of my need to control the outcome."

To help illustrate her story and realization, Amanda, who is expecting her first child, spoke of a minor detail in the icon of the Annunciation: in the lower right-hand corner of the icon, notice how Mary drops a roll of yarn which she was using to help sew a veil for the Jerusalem temple. This may seem like a minor detail, but Amanda feels that this action is emblematic of a deeper human dilemma: Mary is able to toss aside her work for an earthly temple once

she learns that she will become the Temple of Jesus Christ. "I look at Mary dropping the yarn," Amanda said, "and I think of how often we feel like Mary when life doesn't go according to our plans."

Amanda told her St. Stephen Church audience that she struggled for the first half of that week, trying to manipulate the results of her work. Soon, however, she realized it was essential to relinquish personal control if the Holy Spirit was to help her and guide her hand. "Iconography made me realize this," Amanda impressed upon everyone. Then, looking again to Mary she said, "perhaps we too need to let go of what we think is most important to become true icons of God." ■

Amanda Singel and husband Chris attend Holy Ghost Church McKees Rocks, Pa.



Happy Mother's Day!

The staff of the Byzantine Catholic WORLD wishes all Mothers, Grandmothers, Godmothers (and expectant Mothers!) a Blessed and Happy Mother's Day May 9

He Granted Life: Choirs shine in Paschal presentation

EASTERN CHRISTIAN CHOIRS PERFORM, CAPACITY CROWD ATTENDS INAUGURAL EVENT AT CATHEDRAL

Bells pealed joyously at precisely 3:00 p.m. Sunday, April 18 as choristers processed into the Cathedral of St. John the Baptist in Munhall, Pa. to present "He Granted Life: Songs of Pascha." The much-anticipated program featured the host Pittsburgh Byzantine Catholic Archeparchial Choir (PBCAC) and four choirs from Eastern Orthodox churches in the Pittsburgh area.

Metropolitan Archbishop Basil, hierarch of the Byzantine Catholic (Ruthenian) Archeparchy of Pittsburgh sat alongside Metropolitan Nicholas of the American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese of the USA as Archpriest Dennis M. Bogda, rector of the Cathedral welcomed the capacity crowd. Clergy, religious and faithful from a number of eastern traditions filled the pews and loft, awaiting the presentation of each participating choir.

Beginning the program was the Choir of St. Peter and St. Paul Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Carnegie, Pa. (Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA), pastored by Father Steve Repa. Director Cynthia Mycyk led the choir in beautiful renditions of beloved classical and traditional Paschal hymns, including four selections from the Paschal Canon and "Christos Voskres" by Turchianov. The colorful and intricate Ukrainian embroideries worn by the members of the choir also added warm visual beauty to their presentation.

The Byzantine Choir of St. George Antiochian Orthodox Cathedral in Pittsburgh, Pa. (Self-Ruled Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America), where Father

John Abdalah is Dean, then gathered in the presentation area in front of the iconostasis. The choir's music was composed by members or modeled after Byzantine Chant melodies of Mitri el-Murr, (1880-1969), the Protosaltis (first cantor) of the

One by one, the audience arose in their pews, moved to tears of joy at the magnificent sound of nearly 100 voices of different traditions singing as one in prayerful harmony.

Patriarchate of Antioch, who was the first to write troparia in Arabic in Byzantine notation. Dramatically dressed in black, the six young singers, under the direction of Stephen Esper, filled the Cathedral with an intriguing, prayerful sonority as they sang in ancient chant style extolling the glorious Resurrection.

Metropolitan Nicholas, accompanied by Father Robert Buczak of St. Nicholas Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Church in Homestead smiled and nodded with approval as director Andrew Talarovich, Jr. led the St. Nicholas Church Choir to the presentation area. Attired in classic white and black, the 20 men and women presented a jubilant program of Paschal and liturgical music, expertly sung in a variety of

languages and styles, from English and Church Slavonic to Serbian and Greek. Director Talarovich invited the audience to join in and sing some of the more familiar tunes, which they did with joy and enthusiasm.

Very Reverend Father Paul Suda, Dean of St. Alexander Nevsky Orthodox Cathedral (Orthodox Church of America), Allison Park, Pa., took the podium to introduce his church's choir, directed by Mrs. Larice Nescott. Father Paul reminded Metropolitan Basil that in 2011 the Gregorian and Julian calendars will once again coincide for the Feast of the Resurrection, and joked, "start planning!" It was evident that the St. Alexander Choir enjoy sharing their faith and traditions via their well-rehearsed and resonant voices as they sang four-part arrangements by Glagolev and Balakirev, and various renditions of "Christ is Risen" in English, Slavonic, Serbian, Ukrainian, Romanian, Arabic, and Greek musical styles.

The Archeparchial Choir was the final group to perform their songs of Pascha. Led by director Darlene Fejka, the PBCAC, comprised of parishioners from 20 different churches of the Archeparchy, presented a flowing program of hymns and praises, beginning with the "Hymn of the Resurrection" from Paschal Matins. The 35-member choir also sang troparia of the Paschal season and several arrangements of "Christos Voskres - Christ is Risen" with their usual passion and exuberance, concluding their portion of the program.

Director Fejka then invited all choirs to gather in the performance area to sing an Eastern Christian repertory

standard, "The Lord's Prayer" by Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov. The reaction was profound. One by one, the audience arose in their pews, moved to tears of joy at the magnificent sound of nearly 100 voices of different traditions singing as one in prayerful harmony.

In response, Metropolitan Basil addressed the congregation, thanking them for attending, and commending each choir and their directors for their inspired performances. Metropolitan Nicholas also offered words of thanks and commendation. Following the reading of an excerpt from the Paschal homily of St. John Chrysostom by Metropolitan Basil, the combined choirs sang Dmitriy Bortniansky's "Blessed Be the Name of the Lord" and offered "Many Years" following intonation for blessings by both Metropolitans.

The program concluded with a resounding simple-chant version of "Christ is Risen," sung in the vernacular of each participating Church. A hospitality reception, hosted by the Archeparchy and coordinated by the Cathedral, immediately followed at the Cathedral Center. Choirs and attendees - including many clergy and religious - socialized and enjoyed a buffet of hors d'oeuvres, desserts and refreshments.

Pascha will be celebrated by both Catholics and Orthodox on April 24 in 2011. Plans are in the works to set a mutually available date for an encore presentation of the glorious songs of Pascha. ■

*Photos pages 6-7
Michael Haritan Photography*



Attendees and participating choirs of "He Granted Life: Songs of Pascha" listen to the presentation by the choir of St. Nicholas Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Church.

page 7 photos, top to bottom, left to right:

- Metropolitan Basil addresses participants and attendees.
- Pittsburgh Byzantine Catholic Archeparchial Choir performs.
- Combined performance of all five participating choirs.
- Metropolitan Nicholas offers greetings.
- Byzantine Choir of St. George Antiochian Orthodox Cathedral entrances the audience.
- Combined choirs sing "The Lord's Prayer."
- Cynthia Mycyk directs the choir of St. Peter and St. Paul Ukrainian Orthodox Church.
- Larice Nescott leads the St. Alexander Nevsky Orthodox Cathedral Choir.
- Father Paul Suda at the speaker's podium.
- Stephen Esper (*center*) directs the Byzantine Choir of St. George Antiochian Orthodox Cathedral.
- PBCAC Director Darlene Fejka.
- Combined choirs sing "Blessed be the Name of the Lord."
- Cantor and Director Andrew Talarovich (*front left*) leads the choir of St. Nicholas Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Church.



HE GRANTED LIFE

SONGS OF PASCHA



Cathedral of St. John the Baptist, Munhall, Pa.
Sunday, April 18, 2010



Michael Hartman Photography



THE JOYOUS SEASON

Sing and be glad!

by Sandy Simko



For BIGGER-Kids . . .



Do you know how many days Jesus remained on earth before he ascended into heaven?

Remember that number which kept popping up in scriptures? Indeed — it is number 40. This time period that includes the 40 days from the Resurrection of Jesus to his Ascension is known as THE JOYOUS SEASON.

- During the week after Pascha - Bright Week - the Royal Doors of the *iconostasis* (Icon Screen) remain opened, reminding us of the *joyful* news that the gates of heaven are opened.

- We didn't have to fast or abstain from meat on the Friday of that week. We continue to celebrate by enjoying the rich Paschal foods;

- The *joyful* greeting CHRIST IS RISEN! INDEED HE IS RISEN! is echoed throughout our Church community;

- The clergy is back to wearing bright (white or gold) vestments;

- Colorful and fragrant flowers adorn the tomb (grave) of Jesus and the church;

- The gospels are filled with readings of *joyful* healing events;

- Jesus appeared to his believers during this *joyful* time period.

After the three Myrrh-bearing women discovered the huge stone had been rolled

away from the tomb of Jesus, they were *joyful* with the angel's message that 'He has been raised from the dead.' (Mt 28:7)

It was a *joyous* experience when Jesus appeared and spoke to Mary Magdalene, telling her to spread the word of his resurrection.

For John, it was a *joyous* experience to find the tomb of Jesus empty. His faith told him Jesus had resurrected.

It was a *joyous* time for Cleopas and his traveling friend to finally recognize the living Jesus as he broke bread with the men.

In the locked room, the 11 disciples felt *joy* in their hearts when they realized that Jesus was there in the room with them.

It was a *joyous* and enlightened Thomas when his faith returned upon seeing Jesus.

Peter and other apostles were *joyous* when finally their fishing net was heavy with fish. It was at this time Jesus instructed Peter to care for his believers and to nourish their beliefs in God.

Let us be *joyous* with the knowledge that through the death and resurrection of Jesus we can find our way to everlasting happiness in heaven with him.

Indeed this is a JOYOUS SEASON — let us sing and be glad! ■

Wordwise Activity

Word-SEARCH

Using the list below, find and circle the words which appear in the "Sing and Be Glad" article. Words may be found across, down, diagonally or backwards!

D	Q	N	F	E	L	Y	R	V	C	H	N
O	I	G	O	E	O	I	R	L	N	O	A
B	K	S	G	S	S	J	E	A	I	E	P
K	N	N	C	E	A	O	E	T	M	D	O
Z	A	I	N	I	P	E	C	S	R	B	S
M	I	Q	M	A	P	E	S	K	U	F	T
P	Z	Q	S	M	R	L	K	O	T	S	L
E	V	F	O	R	T	Y	E	R	A	A	E
T	T	S	U	O	Y	O	J	S	C	M	L
E	A	S	C	E	N	S	I	O	N	O	G
R	E	N	H	O	J	R	P	B	H	H	I
R	V	L	J	S	A	A	H	I	I	T	V

- | | | |
|-----------|--------|--------------|
| ANGEL | FORTY | PETER |
| APOSTLE | JESUS | RESURRECTION |
| ASCENSION | JOHN | RISEN |
| CLEOPAS | JOYOUS | SEASON |
| DISCIPLES | MARY | THOMAS |

SEE ANSWER KEY ON PAGE 12.

For KINDER-Kids . . .

Jesus said to let the children come to him.

He dearly loves you.

You do not have to understand everything about God.

There are mysteries that even adults don't completely understand.

This is okay!

Your parents love and care for you.

You completely trust them.

God asks for you to also put your complete trust in him.

He will love and care for you.



"Let the children come to me, and do not prevent them; for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these."
Matthew 19:14

Pope urges competency in digital technology

MESSAGE FOR 44TH WORLD COMMUNICATIONS DAY, MAY 16



Dear Brothers and Sisters,

The theme of this year's World Communications Day - *The Priest and Pastoral Ministry in a Digital World: New Media at the Service of the Word* - is meant to coincide with the Church's celebration of the Year for Priests. It focuses attention on the important and sensitive pastoral area of digital communications, in which priests can discover new possibilities for carrying out their ministry to and for the Word of God. Church communities have always used the modern media for fostering communication, engagement with society, and, increasingly, for encouraging dialogue at a wider level. Yet the recent, explosive growth and greater social impact of these media make them all the more important for a fruitful priestly ministry.

Using new communication technologies, priests can introduce people to the life of the Church and help our contemporaries to discover the face of Christ. They will best achieve this aim if they learn, from the time of their formation, how to use these technologies in a competent and appropriate way, shaped by sound theological insights and reflecting a strong priestly spirituality grounded in constant dialogue with the Lord. Yet priests present in the world of digital communications should be less notable for their media savvy than for their priestly heart, their closeness to Christ. This will not only enliven their pastoral outreach, but also will give a "soul" to the fabric of communications that makes up the "Web."

Who better than a priest, as a man of God, can develop and put into practice, by his competence in current digital technology, a pastoral outreach capable of making God concretely present in today's world and presenting the religious wisdom of the past as a treasure which can inspire our efforts to live in the present with dignity while building a better future? Consecrated men and women working in the media have a special responsibility for opening the door to new forms of encounter, maintaining the quality of human interaction, and showing concern for individuals and their genuine spiritual needs. They can thus help the men and women of our digital age to sense the Lord's presence, to grow in expectation and hope, and to draw near to the Word of God which offers salvation and fosters an integral human development. In this way the Word can traverse the many crossroads created by the intersection of all the different "highways" that form "cyberspace," and show that God has his rightful place in every age, including our own. Thanks to the new communications media, the Lord can walk the streets of our cities and, stopping before the threshold of our homes and our hearts, say once more: "Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will enter his house and dine with him, and he with me" (Rev 3:20). ■

From the Vatican, 24 January 2010,
Feast of Saint Francis de Sales.

BENEDICTUS XVI

The Holy Father's entire message for World Communications Day 2010 can be viewed on-line at:
http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/messages/communications/index_en.htm

Two ace training program

MC KEES ROCKS PARISH CERTIFIES READERS

Max Puluka and Luke Iyengar had a "standing" engagement - literally - on Tuesday nights during the 2010 Great Fast (Feb. 16 - March 23). The reward for their labor came on Saturday, April 17 during the evening Divine Liturgy at Holy Ghost Church in McKees Rocks, Pa. when Father Frank Firko commissioned Max and Luke in a brief ceremony. The new readers then alternately chanted the epistle following their commissioning.

The six-week course was comprised of two objectives or sections:

1) Theological. This dimension provided the readers with background material and context for the epistles which they would read and also helped them to become familiar with how scripture fits into our Divine Liturgy. The six lessons, instructed by Chris Singel, were: *The Role of the Reader in the Liturgy; The Bible and Liturgy; Paul and His Letters; The Prophets; The Pentateuch; and finally, Acts of the Apostles and Old Testament Wisdom Literature.*

2) Practical. This segment introduced readers to the basics of chanting. Instructor



Father Frank Firko congratulates newly commissioned readers Max Puluka (left) and Luke Iyengar (right)

Steve Puluka based his session on *Reading for Sense and The Basic Chant Phrases; Sense Unit Exercises; Reading Hebrew and Greek Words; Articulation and Stress Exercises; Projection and Breath Control; and finally, Putting It All Together.*

Participants had to complete both sections before receiving a certificate. They were slowly "groomed" into chanters - first chanting basic phrases, then whole sentences and paragraphs, then recorded and critiqued, and finally, taken into the church to read entire epistles aloud. (That's when they realized how important projection is.)

"Currently, there are no plans to offer this course again, unless we are asked to. It was basically a one-time offering," reports Chris Singel. ■

PBCAC, Slavjane in 53rd Pittsburgh Folk Festival

FOOD, ENTERTAINMENT, CRAFTS MAY 14 -16

Celebrating "Unity in Diversity" for 53 years, the 2010 Pittsburgh International Folk Festival will take place May 14, 15 and 16 at the Monroeville Convention Center, 101 Mall Boulevard, Monroeville, Pa. 15146, located on U.S. Route 22, 12 miles from downtown Pittsburgh. After a difficult decision last March to cancel the event for 2009, the Festival board is looking forward to continuing the five-decade long tradition.

Representing the heritage of Carpatho-Rus' in music,



and song is the Slavjane Folk Ensemble of McKees Rocks (Saturday, May 15 at 2:00 p.m. and Sunday, May 16 at 1:00 and 4:45 p.m.), and the Pittsburgh Byzantine Catholic Archdiocesan Choir (Sunday, May 16 at 12:30 p.m.).

Tickets are \$10 for adults and \$5 for students 13-17; there is no charge for children 12 and under. Purchase may be made from any participating nationality group. See Festival web site at <http://pghfolkfest.org> for contact information and full schedule of events. ■

THOUGHTS FOR OUR DAY

by Archpriest David M. Petras



THE RESURRECTION AND CHRISTIAN LIFE

There was a story told of Christian life in Soviet Russia. The Communist party controlled the government for almost seventy-five years, three generations. One of its key policies was the promotion of atheism. Officially, freedom of religion was tolerated, but, in reality, the rights of the faithful were often disregarded, and believers even actively persecuted. Particularly in the early days of their tyranny, the Communist party really thought that atheism would win out, that “reasonable” people would come to understand that there is no God. On one occasion, therefore, they organized a public debate on belief in God. Two speakers were invited, one an atheist supported by the party, the other a believer, whom they thought to make look like a superstitious fool. The atheist gave a long talk, explaining how materialism is the only logical explanation for the universe. The Christian then rose to speak, but all he said was, “Christ is risen!” (*Christos voskrese!*). The whole crowd immediately shouted back, “Indeed, he is risen!” (*Voistinnu voskrese!*)

It is not possible to say when and where this happened, or even that it happened in exactly this way. The story is told to show that atheism is deluded if it thinks that faith in God is easily destroyed. However, the story also shows something else about our Christian faith - its center in the resurrection of Christ. St. Paul emphasizes this, “If Christ has not been raised, then empty is our preaching; empty, too, your faith. (1 Corinthians 15:14)” Christianity without resurrection cannot survive, it would only be an empty shell.

The importance of resurrection is especially manifest in the liturgical experience of Holy Week in the Church. The suffering and death of Jesus is important as a revelation of God’s infinite love for the creatures he has made in his image and likeness, but it is not the real point of the story. At

“God 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

the morning office, the Matins, of Good Friday, at the last sticheron, we hear, “To restore the order of mankind, you commanded Hades to release its captives. For you came to give life and not death.” The God in whom we have faith is the Giver of life.

Who is Jesus? In the gospel of St. John, Jesus says, “I came so that they might have life and have it more abundantly. (John 10:10)” The gospel is full of stories of Jesus giving life and the fullness of life through healing. In three cases, he brings people who died back to life: the daughter of Jairus, the son of the widow of Naim, and his friend Lazarus. Sometimes “modern people” dismiss these

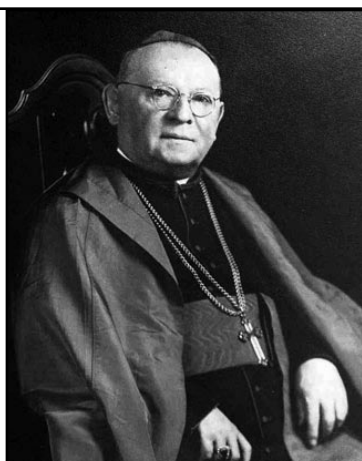
wondrous deeds as impossible and contrary to the scientific laws of physics. However, it seems that this requires a little bit of hubris, as if we actually knew how creation functions, or, even more, as if we understood the divine laws of life. The story of the gospel ends with the resurrection of Jesus, but we can see an essential difference between the first three raisings and the rising of Christ. Our Lord brought the first three back into this earthly life, giving them more years until their final death. In this way he revealed that he is, indeed, the Master of life, who has come to give us the fullness of life. He reveals that our life on earth is the beginning, the promise and the hope of life without limitations, for he gives life and not death. Thus John tells us, “God 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)” We proclaim this in every Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom. Again, Jesus says, “whoever hears my word and believes in the one who sent me has eternal life and will not come to condemnation, but has passed from death to life. (John 5:24)”

When Jesus rose from the dead, he came back to his followers and ate and drank with them: with the disciples at Emmaus, and in the upper room, and on the shore of the Sea of Tiberius. The gospel writers take great care to show the bodily resurrection of our Lord. Jesus, however, did not return to live with us in this world. His resurrection is the beginning of a new and glorified life that encompasses and defies our human lives,

smashing limitations, giving life to all, and transcending secular existence. Jesus is revealed to be the Messiah, the Son of God, and the life and light of the world, as St. John wrote, “this life was the light of the human race, the light shines in the darkness and the darkness has not overcome it. (John 1:4-5)” So Jesus is now seated at the right hand of the Father, and in him we have the hope of life and glory.

We celebrate this glory in the worship of the Church. Just as we fast for forty days, plus the week of our Lord’s passion and death, so we celebrate the Resurrection for forty days, sealing it with the feast of the Ascension, when the Son of God returned to his glory at the right hand of the Father, but now with a human body and soul, to signify our hope of glory. The human nature is now glorified through the Resurrection of Christ. The mystery of the Ascension is then celebrated until Pentecost, which is the culmination in our age of the presence of God through the Holy Spirit. During the forty day feast of the Resurrection, on three Sundays, Pascha, Thomas Sunday and the Sunday of the Ointment-bearers, we remember the Resurrection of Christ. When Christ appeared to his disciples after his Resurrection, he sent his apostles to proclaim the Gospel and to baptize. The mystery of baptism, therefore, is commemorated in the second three Sundays of the forty days - the commemorations of the paralytic man at the pool of Bethesda, the Samaritan woman at the well of Jacob, and the man born blind at the pool of Siloam. This connection between resurrection and baptism needs to be more strongly emphasized. ■

In
Blessed
Memory



HAPPY ARE THE ONES YOU HAVE CHOSEN AND RECEIVED, O LORD;
THEY ARE REMEMBERED FOREVER. ALLELUIA!

Commemorating the 62nd Anniversary
of the repose in the Lord of

Bishop Basil Takach
Bishop of Pittsburgh

Born: October 27, 1879

Ordained: December 12, 1902

Episcopal Ordination: June 15, 1924

Fell asleep in the Lord: May 13, 1948

Slavjane concert a tribute to late director, founder

JACK POLOKA TO BE MEMORIALIZED AT MAY 22 PROGRAM

by Darlene Fejka

Jack Poloka was one of the most passionate ethnic crusaders I've ever known in my half-century-plus of life on Earth. His fame as an avant-garde choreographer in the world of junior tamburitza and folk groups was legendary. When I was a young junior "tammie," I was pretty envious of those groups which he taught, because they always did very "cool" dances. Little did I know that a few years later I would meet my future husband through that man with whom I also would spend over 30 years in partnership teaching one of the most enduring junior folk ensembles in the country.

Other than his family and his faith, perhaps Jack's greatest passion was teaching, directing, and guiding the Slavjane Folk Ensemble every Thursday in rehearsal at Holy Ghost Church hall in McKees Rocks, and in performance all over the U.S.



Jack Poloka

Slavjane Folk Ensemble



Father Joseph I. Chornyak

FALLS ASLEEP IN THE LORD DURING BRIGHT WEEK

Reverend Father Joseph I. Chornyak, former pastor of St. Mary Church, New Salem, Pa. for thirty-five years, fell asleep in the Lord at Uniontown Hospital on Bright Thursday, April 8, 2010. One of seven children of the late Basil and Anna Kovacs Chornyak, Father Joseph was the last member of his immediate family.

He was born in Pittsburgh on March 13, 1927, and was a member of St. John Chrysostom Parish in the Greenfield section of the city. His seminary studies began at St. Procopius College in Lisle, Ill, and were completed at SS. Cyril and Methodius Seminary in Pittsburgh. Father Joseph was ordained to the priesthood on June 6, 1953 by the late Bishop Daniel Ivancho.

His early assignments were in Pennsylvania to Holy Ghost Church, Charleroi; St. Nicholas, Perryopolis; St. Mary, Monessen; and to St. John in Hazleton, where he was always quick to mention that Metropolitan Archbishop Basil served as his altar server. He then served Holy Ghost Church,

Mahwah and St. Michael (now Cathedral) in Passaic, N.J. Returning to Pennsylvania, Father Joseph was assigned to St. Mary, Bradenville and then to St. Mary, New Salem, from where he retired on February 29, 1998. During his time there, he built the beautiful parish complex of church, rectory and social hall.

On the Archieparchial level, Father Joseph taught Church Slavonic at SS. Cyril and Methodius Seminary, and served as a notary of the Tribunal, a director of the museum, and a member of the Board of Directors of the former Archieparchial Finance Institute.

Predeceased by brothers John, William, Michael, Peter, and sisters Mary and Anna, he is survived by nieces, nephews, great-nieces and great-nephews.

His body lay in state at St. Mary, his final assignment, on Friday, April 9. The funeral service for a priest was celebrated that evening by area clergy. On Saturday, April 10, Metropolitan Archbishop Basil celebrated the funeral Divine Liturgy with Monsignor Russell



+ Father Joseph I. Chornyak

and in the Rusyn homeland. And with good reason. Being mostly Rusyn, he really did live the "Ja Rusyn Byl, Jes'm i

Budu" (I was, am, will always be a Rusyn) life, even though I would always remind him of our shared Croatian heritage

A. Duker, Protosyncellus of the Archeparchy, and Father Jerome G. Botsko, administrator of St. Mary church, concelebrating. Deacon John M. Hanchin served as deacon. In his homily, Metropolitan Basil mentioned that Father Joseph served the Lord and proclaimed the Gospel in his own unique way, using the gifts and talents which were his, just as each of us is called to do.

Interment followed in Calvary Cemetery, Pittsburgh. ■

May God grant to His servant the Priest Joseph Eternal Memory and Peaceful Repose!

on his mother's side. His wife Teresa and my husband Greg (both full-blooded Rusyns) are first cousins, so, family ties being what they are, it was hard to be anything but Rusyn.

Passion permeated everything Jack did, especially his tenor tenure with the Archieparchial choir, his involvement with the Pittsburgh Folk Festival, and his dedication to the Carpatho-Rusyn Society and the Rusyn Heritage Radio Program. I always wondered how he could do all of the things he did and hold down a "real" job at the same time, but he did that too (at Equitable Resources) with equal enthusiasm for many

Slavjane continued on page 12

In Blessed Memory



HAPPY ARE THE ONES YOU HAVE CHOSEN AND RECEIVED, O LORD: THEY ARE REMEMBERED FOREVER. ALLELUIA!

Commemorating the 19th Anniversary of the repose in the Lord of **Bishop Nicholas T. Elko** Bishop of Pittsburgh

Born: December 14, 1909
Ordained: September 30, 1934
Episcopal Ordination: March 6, 1955
Fell asleep in the Lord: May 18, 1991

Slavjane

continued from page 12

years until he retired to spend even more time doing all of those other things he loved.

Jack was a one-of-a-kind, truly unique human being. I miss him dearly. Sure, we had our differences over the years, but we always compromised for the greater good, which he always did without a doubt. There will never be another Jack Poloka, although I and many others do place the utmost confidence in his son Dean's passion to carry on his father's legacy ... which, judging from the way he has assumed the responsibility to finish the unfinished work which Jack left so unexpectedly when he fell asleep in the Lord on March 16 - is certainly the next best thing. ■

AROUND THE ARCHEPARCHY



FUNNY FUNDRAISER - St. Gregory Byzantine Catholic Church, Upper St. Clair, Pa. welcomes David Kaye and his band of Merry Comedians on Friday, May 7. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. This is an adults-only event with church-appropriate, "PG" humor. Soda, draft beer, water, munchie snacks provided. Patrons welcome to bring their own tailgate-style food. 50/50 drawing, auction items, artwork for sale. Tickets \$20. Contact Mike Kiss for information at 412-818-1295, or phone the church at 412-835-7800.

50th ANNIVERSARY DINNER - The Byzantine Serra of Pittsburgh invites you to join them Wednesday, May 19 for a festive celebration of the 50th anniversary of their founding. "Our mission ... is to foster, affirm, promote and support, by prayer and deed, vocations to the priestly and diaconal ministries and to the consecrated life, in the Byzantine Catholic Church." For more information on how to join the Serra Club, or to make reservations to join them for their 50th Anniversary Dinner, contact President Gerry Rhoads at 412-653-6843.

SPIRIT DAY MAY 29 - Holy Ghost Church, McKees Rocks, Pa. ByzanTEENS from the Pittsburgh area will gather to discuss upcoming events, watch a video, play basketball, and attend the 6:00 p.m. Divine Liturgy. For more information, contact Chris Singel at 412-526-6015.

ALL-YOU-CAN-EAT BREAKFAST BUFFET, FLEA MARKET/CRAFT SHOW Sponsored by St. Mary's Youth Group, St. Mary Church, Trauger (Latrobe), Pa. 4480 Route 981 on Sunday, June 6 from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Adult Breakfast \$6; Children 5-10 \$3; 4 and under FREE. Vendors needed! Call Youth Advisor Laurie Knouse at 724-423-7396 for information.

SAVE THE DATE - AUG. 14 - Bus it with the Archieparchial Choir from Pittsburgh to Shaker Woods Festival and Our Lady of Lebanon Shrine Assumption Pilgrimage in Columbiana and North Jackson, Ohio. Phone Darlene Fejka at 412-231-4000 ext. 20.



The Slavjane Folk Ensemble's 34th Annual Concert will be presented Saturday, May 22 at 2:00 p.m. at the Andrew W. Mellon Middle School Auditorium, Washington Road (Route 19) in Mount Lebanon, Pa. Adult tickets are \$8; Students \$5; Children 4 and under are free. Concert ticket includes admission to reception at Holy Ghost (North Side) Social Hall, Superior Avenue, held immediately following the concert. Reception-only admission is \$4.

Contact Jackie Righetti (412-749-0695), Sandy Morrow (412-344-4963) or any Slavjane member for tickets.

The ensemble's "home" is Holy Ghost Church, McKees Rocks, Pa., where Father Frank Firko is pastor. Slavjane is a cultural program supported by the Greek Catholic Union of the USA and endorsed by the Byzantine Catholic Archeparchy of Pittsburgh as the official representative of Carpatho-Ruthenian cultural and ethnic heritage.

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**NEXT
ISSUE DATE:
MAY 23**

**COPY
DEADLINE:
MAY 11**

DATES TO REMEMBER



MAY 9
Mother's Day

MAY 13
Feast of the Ascension of our Lord
CHANCERY CLOSED

MAY 16
Presbyteral Ordination of Deacon William Rupp
Cathedral of St. John the Baptist - Munhall, Pa.

MAY 17 - 20
Meeting of ECED
SS. Cyril & Methodius Seminary - Pittsburgh, Pa.

MAY 19
Byzantine Serra Club 50th Anniversary Celebration
Crown Plaza Hotel - Upper St. Clair, Pa.

MAY 23
Pentecost Sunday

See more upcoming events at www.archeparchy.org