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Celebrating the Radiant Resurrection

CHRISTOS VOSKRESE! VOSTINNU VOSKRESE!



Metropolitan Archbishop William C. Skurla blesses Easter baskets at St. John the Baptist Cathedral in Munhall, Pa. Photo by Nick Havrilla Sr. For more photos of Pascha celebrations across the Archdiocese of Pittsburgh, see pages 6 to 12.

A journey to the altar of Christ fulfilled

FATHERS TIMOTHY FARISS, JOHN WELCH ORDAINED TO PRIESTHOOD AT ST. MICHAEL IN HERMITAGE, PA.

By David Mayernik Jr.
Editor

Father Timothy Fariss and Father John Welch were ordained priests of the Byzantine Catholic Archdiocese of Pittsburgh by Metropolitan Archbishop William C. Skurla April 7 at St. Michael in Hermitage, Pa.

Celebrants also included Very Rev. Andrew Deskevich, Father Kevin Marks, Very Rev. Richard Lambert, Father Will Rupp and Father Brian Norrell. Deacon Tyler Wisniewski assisted.

Attending were Very Rev. Jim Spontak, Father Robert Oravetz, Father Mykhaylo Farynets, Father Jim Fraser, Father Miron Kerul'-Kmec Jr. and Father Miron Kerul'-Kmec Sr., Father Michael Kunitz, Deacon Nathaniel Tapsak, Deacon Kyprian Wojciechowski, Deacon Michael Yewcic, Subdeacon Luke



Father John Welch and Father Timothy Fariss read the Ambon Prayer during their ordination ceremony at St. Michael in Hermitage, Pa.

Iyengar and seminarians.

Father Timothy and Father John's home parishes are Assumption of the Mother of God in Weirton, W. Va. and SS. Peter and Paul in Warren, Ohio, respectively.

Archbishop William thanked the families of Father Timothy and Father John for providing new priests to the Archdiocese of

Story continued on page 3

“The Case of St. Symeon the New Theologian”

B.C.S. ANNUAL LECTURE TO BE PRESENTED MAY 7

By The Byzantine Catholic Seminary of SS. Cyril and Methodius

The Byzantine Catholic Seminary in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania is pleased to announce its 24th annual academic lecture to be delivered by Fr. John McGuckin, PhD., DD., DLitt., FRHist. Soc. at 7 PM E.D.T. on 7 May 2024.

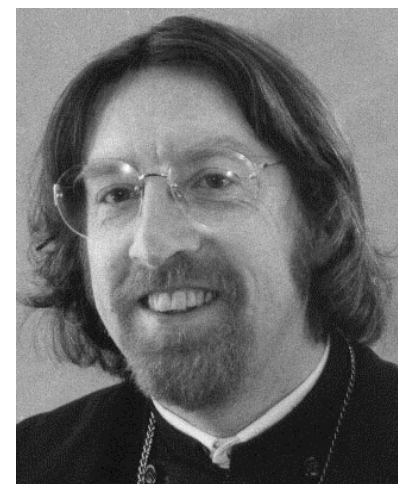
This live-streamed lecture will look at one of the most dramatic and important of all mystical theologians of the Eastern Christian tradition; but one who remains still barely known today.

While serving as an abbot in a turbulent era of Constantinople, Symeon offers his rhapsodic descriptions of his direct encounters with the light of Christ's presence as a teaching that mysticism is not for an élite few but is the grace of the Resurrection offered to all believers.

All are welcome to attend this lecture virtually via the Seminary website at www.bcs.edu. The lecture can also be accessed live or later from archives on the B.C.S. YouTube channel.

The Very Rev. Professor John Anthony McGuckin is an Archbishop of the Orthodox Church in the Patriarchate of Romania's Archdiocese in

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Rev. Dr. John Anthony McGuckin

WORLD

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MISSION

The mission of *The Byzantine Catholic World* is to spread the Gospel message in the rich tradition of the Byzantine Catholic Church; to encourage faithful 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 in the Archeparchy of Pittsburgh, throughout the Metropolitan Church in America, and around the world.

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JUBILEE WEEKEND CELEBRATION

October 12-13
Washington, D.C.-Annandale, VA

ESTABLISHMENT OF BYZANTINE RUTHENIAN CHURCH EXARCHATE IN THE UNITED STATES

The **Jubilee Weekend Celebration** is scheduled for October 12 to 13 in the Washington, D.C.-Annandale, Va. area. This event marks two significant anniversaries: **1924 Centennial**, commemorating the establishment of the Byzantine Ruthenian Church Exarchate in the United States, and **1974 Golden Anniversary**, celebrating the dedication of the Byzantine Ruthenian Chapel in Washington, D.C. and the establishment of the Byzantine Ruthenian Church in the United States, dedicated to the protection of the Mother of God.



Most Reverend Basil Takach, D.D., the First Byzantine-Ruthenian Bishop in the United States Episcopal Ordination, Pentecost Sunday, June 15, 1924, St. Athanasius Church, Rome, Italy Ruthenian Exarchate Established February 25, 1924

Pope Pius XI appointed Father Basil Takach as Bishop for United States May 20, 1924.

Bishop Takach arrived at New York Harbor August 13, 1924, on the liner RMS Mauretania and offered a Moleben of Thanksgiving at St. Mary of the Protection Church, New York City.



A journey to the altar of Christ fulfilled

FATHERS TIMOTHY FARISS, JOHN WELCH ORDAINED TO PRIESTHOOD AT ST. MICHAEL IN HERMITAGE, PA.

Story continued from page 1

Pittsburgh.

They bestowed their first blessing during a reception at St. Michael's Social Center following their ordinations.

Since Nov. 2023, 11 new deacons have been ordained and three additional new priests will be ordained this year in addition to Father Timothy and Father John.

"Vocations are good. Vocations are strong," Father Kevin Marks, pastor of St. Michael in Hermitage and St. Michael in Campbell, Ohio, said. He is also Vocations Director for the Archeparchy of Pittsburgh.

"In John Welch and Timothy Fariss, God sees a reflection of His Son...and as God gazes at John and Tim today, he sees two men with shepherds' hearts who even in their weakness, humanness, and sinfulness can teach and lead and sanctify the people of God," Father Kevin said.

Father Kevin recited Pope Francis' words from his message on the World Day of Prayer for Vocations in 2022, which highlighted the many stories of vocations outlined in the Bible: "In the young woman of Nazareth he saw the Mother of God. In Simon the fisherman he saw Peter, the rock on which he would build his Church. In the publican Levi he recognized the apostle and evangelist Matthew, and in Saul, a harsh persecutor of Christians, he saw Paul, the apostle of the Gentiles."

"Every day we behold the gift of vocations and its many expressions: Marriage, religious life, single life and also sacred Holy Orders," Father Kevin said.

He said God uses many people in discernment process for candidates, including vocations directors, priests, faithful and many others.

"The candidate prays a lot; the Church, for Her part, does the same," he said.

"It is a long journey but this mysterious process is as beautiful as an Easter lily."

Father Kevin said the new family of Father Timothy and Father John — the Presbyterate of the Archeparchy of Pittsburgh — is the "greatest fraternity in the whole world" and they are pieces of "tile" that form the beautiful mosaic known as the Church.

"We are now your family." ■



Photos by Michael J. Vasil



REPORT FROM THE SOCIETY OF SAINTS CYRIL AND METHODIUS

Society of Saints Cyril and Methodius prepares Easter basket for Seminary community

By The Society of Saints Cyril and Methodius

During Holy Week, members of the Society of Saints Cyril and Methodius prepared and assembled the traditional Paschal foods to share with the Seminarians, their families, and the priest faculty members in residence at our Byzantine Catholic Seminary.

A large basket, along with a large box for the overflow, was delivered to the Seminary on Holy Saturday. Ham, kolbassi, and paskas were donated by SS. Peter and Paul Church, Braddock; St. Gregory Church, Upper St. Clair; and St. John Cathedral, respectively.

Society members donated hrutka/cirak, lamb butter molds, dyed hard boiled eggs, beets and horseradish, a salt shaker, Easter meat loaf, nut, apricot, and poppyseed rolls, wine, and specialty chocolate Easter eggs.

Gift bags for the children of the Seminarians included a Sarris chocolate cross, wooden pysanky decorated eggs, and an Easter craft kit.

It was our pleasure to add to the celebration of Pascha at the Seminary and show our support for Vocations! ■

Meeting set for May 15

Society of Saints Cyril and Methodius, the Vocations Ministry of the Archeparchy, cordially invites all to attend their meeting at 6:30 p.m. May 15 at St. John Cathedral, Munhall. Father Ronald Barusefski, rector of the Byzantine Catholic Seminary of SS. Cyril and Methodius, will give a talk, "The Journey of a Priestly Vocation."

Father Ronald will discuss the many aspects of formation that a candidate for the priesthood encounters as he makes the journey toward ordination. These will include the four dimensions of priestly ordination - the human, spiritual, intellectual, and pastoral dimensions - as well as the minor and major orders that mark the advancement of the seminarian throughout his journey.

The meeting will also be a chance to meet the members of the Society and learn more about how they offer prayerful and practical support to seminarians, deacon students, clergy, and religious. Father Ronald's talk will be recorded and available for viewing on the Facebook page of the Society of Saints Cyril and Methodius.

For more information, contact Diane Pochron pochron@pitt.edu 412-303-6534.



Society of Saints Cyril and Methodius Eastern Catholic Vocations Ministry

Join us in our mission to foster and promote religious vocations in the Byzantine Catholic Church of the USA

We are lay men and women dedicated to praying for vocations and offering support and fellowship to seminarians, deacon students and those in formation for religious life.

- Be a "Prayer Partner" to a seminarian, deacon student, or one who is discerning their calling to religious life.
- Participate in events at SS. Cyril and Methodius Seminary and parish locations in the Pittsburgh area: Fellowship, Social, Spiritual
- Attend quarterly meetings in person or online Zoom
- Support our clergy and religious in their ministries

Welcoming New Members Contact:

Diane Pochron, President pochron@pitt.edu * 412-303-6534

A Catechesis on the Mystery of Marriage

TEN COUPLES ATTEND PRE-CANA PROGRAM AT THE BYZANTINE CATHOLIC SEMINARY OF SS. CYRIL AND METHODIUS

By The Office of Religious Education

Ten couples came together at SS. Cyril and Methodius Seminary on March 16 to become more aware of the covenant aspect of Christian marriage and the religious dimension of family life.

Good marriages don't just happen. Loving another person — sinful, flawed, and weak — requires patience, forgiveness, communication and lots and lots of grace.

Pope Francis reminded couples of this when he said: "Love is something we learn: love is something we live; love grows as it is forged by the concrete situations which each particular family experiences."

This Pre Cana program sponsored by the Office of Religious Education consisted of four presentations given by the following gifted presenters:

- Love & Life in the Divine Plan-Father Thom Dansak
- Elements of a Healthy Marriage-Chris & Amanda Singel
- Finances & Budgeting-Mark & Dr. Sandee Collins
- The Mystery of Crowning-Father Ron Barusefski, JCD



Father Ron Barusefski (left), Rector of the Byzantine Catholic Seminary of SS. Cyril and Methodius in Pittsburgh, Pa.

The ten couples participating in the program were from the following parishes: SS. Peter and Paul, Duquesne, Pa.; St. Michael, Canonsburg, Pa.; St. Nicholas, Youngstown, Ohio; Cathedral of St. John the Baptist, Munhall, Pa.; St. John Chrysostom, Pittsburgh, Pa.; St. John the Baptist, Northern Cambria, Pa.; St. Michael, Campbell, Ohio; St. Mary, Bradenville, Pa.; and Holy Spirit, Oakland, Pa.

May God grant to the participating couples peace, health & happiness for many blessed years! ■



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REFLECTION FROM MOUNT ST. MACRINA

Purity of vision with eyes, body

By Sister Barbara Jean Mihalchick, OSBM
Sisters of St. Basil the Great



This is a transcript of her Sept. 9, 2022 reflection. It can be viewed on the Facebook page of the Sisters of St. Basil the Great at <https://www.facebook.com/sistersofstbasil.uniontown>.

Glory to Jesus Christ!

We move on now, continuing the Ten Commandments, on to the Ninth Commandment: “You shall not covet your neighbor’s wife.”

This makes me ask the question: Have you ever done exactly what you didn’t want to do? Or exactly the thing you thought you already learned not to do?

We humans are composite beings. So, we’re body and spirit. And therefore we experience a certain tension because both seek from us. The struggles of these tendencies of the body and spirit were noted even by St. Paul in

his Epistles. He writes a good deal about his own struggles with this and then his teachings on what to do.

The struggle is for each us, day by day. It’s a battle. Hour by hour, sometimes. It’s a consequence of sin and it affects all of humanity.

What helps us in this battle? God’s grace, of course, but we must seek it and use it to build habits, to build virtues that could counteract one’s own sinful tendencies. This applies to all of the Commandments, actually, and to the teachings of our Lord Jesus. So, the Ninth Commandment calls us to develop a foundation that counters our tendencies to lust and sins of the flesh.

Our sexuality is so deeply integrated in every aspect of our lives. Therefore developing this discipline is really important. It affects all of our relationships, for instance. When we deal rightly with these strong attractions we’re developing a moral integrity and that’s most important in right relationships with others. Thus the commandment gets a title like

“Thou shall not covet (steal) your neighbor’s wife” or even desire her. It’s referring to all that relates to purity of heart, right relationships, modesty in how we think and what we do. Therefore we pray for and work for the virtue of chastity and modesty. What does that mean? It means the undivided heart. We want to come to where spirit and body both seek the good, practice the moral good.

For this we need to be seeking God’s will, of course. That’s the first thing. And then a purity of vision with the eyes and the body and the desires of the heart.

One’s impure thoughts, impure vision toward others or toward seeking to fill our minds and hearts with that which works against this modesty or chastity or purity leads to sin.

Of course, we need prayer. Without the help of God’s grace pure living is impossible. The Mother of God, Mary, offers us her assistance as loving and pure Mother. Ask and you shall receive.

God bless you. ■



BULLETIN BOARD

The following events will take place at Mount St. Macrina House of Prayer, 510 W. Main St., Uniontown, Pa. To register for programs or more information, call 724-438-7149 or email hpmsm@verizon.net.

■ 10 a.m.-1 p.m. Saturday, May 18, **Mother-Daughter Retreat** with Sister Ruth Plante, OSBM. Conference, reflections, prayer service and lunch. Offering: \$40. Registration due: May 13. ■

EASTER SUNDAY BEST

The following submission was received too late for the “Easter Sunday Best” feature in the April issue...but it’s too good not to share with readers! —Editor

Growing up, we attended my grandmother’s church – SS. Peter and Paul in Somerset, NJ – and then St. Mary in Marrielle (now Hillsborough), NJ, after my sister started school.

But we attended both regularly while my granny was alive. Shopping for Easter clothes was always exciting. As the youngest of four girl cousins, I had lots of hand-me-downs, so new Easter outfits were special! My older sister resented being dressed like me, though. But when my daughters were born, what do I do! Buy them lookalike clothes!

Diane Stefanchik Hvasta
Mesa, Ariz.



Alyssa and Nicole Hvasta, Diane Stefanchik’s daughters at Ascension of Our Lord in Williamsburg, Va. (1994)



John and Helen Stefanchik with Janet, Diane and Johnny (1968)

“The Case of St. Symeon the New Theologian”

Story continued from page 1

Western Europe, Rector of St Gregory’s chapel in St. Anne’s on Sea, in North West England; Professor in the Theological Faculty of Oxford University; Senior Professorial Research Fellow at Emory University’s School of Law, and at the St. Irenaeus Orthodox Institute at Radboud University Nijmegen.

He received his Bachelor of Divinity from Heythrop College, a PhD in Patristic Theology from Durham University, a Postgrad. Certificate in Education from Newcastle University, a MA (Ed) in Curriculum Design & Educational Management from Southampton University, and an honorary Doctor of Divinity from St. Vladimir Orthodox Seminary and an honorary Doctor of Letters from the Lucian Blaga University in Romania. He founded and directed the New York Sophia Institute as an advanced research forum for Eastern Orthodox thought and culture.

Since his first book on St. Symeon, he has published over thirty-three books on religious and historical themes, and two volumes of poetry, becoming internationally recognized as a leading interpreter of the Early Christian and Eastern Orthodox traditions. The central focus of his research has revolved around

Byzantine Catholic Seminary Annual Lecture

The lecture of **Father John McGuckin, PhD., DD., DLitt., FRHist. Soc.** will be livestreamed at 7 p.m. May 7 at www.bcs.edu. It will look at one of the most dramatic and important of all mystical theologians of the Eastern Christian tradition; but one who remains still barely known today: St. Symeon.

the thought of the fourth to fifth century Christian Fathers and the Byzantine mystical writers. He has most recently prepared a new translation with commentary on St. Symeon the New Theologian’s Hymns of Divine Eros, one of the greatest of all medieval Orthodox mystical texts, which is to appear with SVS Press, New York, in 2024. His works have been translated into many languages: Romanian, Spanish, Russian, Dutch, Korean and Chinese among them. He has taught in numerous Universities both in America and in Europe, as Visiting Distinguished Professor or as Visiting Scholar, including Kyiv, Sibiu, Bucharest, Oslo, Iasi, Cambridge, Belfast, Oxford, Yale, Sydney and Moscow. He was elected a Fellow of the British Royal Society of Arts in 1986, and

a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society in 1996. He was selected as the prestigious Luce Fellow in Early Christianity in 2006. In addition to his scholarly books, he has published more than 150 research articles, in scholarly journals.

Professor McGuckin has appeared many times on American, British, and Italian television programs, as well as on Radio in Europe, America, and Canada, commenting on religious issues. In 2011, his film, co-authored with Emmy-award-winning director Norris Chumley was released in cinemas, on cable TV and DVD entitled: *Mysteries of the Jesus Prayer*. It can be seen in large part on YouTube under that title. His 2022 online talk on *Orthodoxy in Kiev and Moscow: History of an Ecclesial Union or Subjugation?* is also available there.

Father McGuckin became an Orthodox Christian in 1989 and was ordained to the Diaconate in Baia Mare (Romania) in 1996, and to the priesthood with a pastoral care for Romanians in England, in 1996; and, is married to Eileen McGuckin, a professional MasterIconographer in the Byzantine and Slavic styles. Their family consists of three married children, and seven grandchildren; the makings of a small Irish clan. ■

PARISH NEWS

Celebrating the Radiant Resurrection

ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST CATHEDRAL IN MUNHALL, PA.

Metropolitan Archbishop William Skurla and Very Rev. Andrew Deskevich celebrated Matins of the Resurrection and the Vigil Easter Divine Liturgy March 30 at St. John the Baptist Cathedral in Munhall, Pa.

Following the Liturgy, Metropolitan William blessed Paschal baskets at the social center. ■



Photos by Nick Havrilla Sr.

SS. CYRIL AND METHODIUS IN GIRARD, PA.
SS. PETER AND PAUL IN ERIE, PA.

Parishioners at SS. Cyril and Methodius in Girard, Pa. and SS. Peter and Paul in Erie, Pa. celebrated Easter weekend with processions on Good Friday and Holy Saturday and blessing of Easter baskets.

Father John J. Mihalco is pastor of both parishes. ■



SS. Cyril and Methodius in Girard, Pa.



SS. Peter and Paul in Erie, Pa.

ST. STEPHEN IN NORTH HUNTINGDON, PA.

The faithful at St. Stephen Byzantine Catholic Church in North Huntingdon, Pa. joined together to celebrate Holy Week and the Radiant Resurrection.

RIGHT: The faithful approach to kiss the holy cross held by Father Vasyl Yakubych, the gospel book held by Reader Barry D. Smith and the icon of the Resurrection held by Cameron Polczynski. Bob Lanyi is at left.



Father Vasyl Yakubych blesses the Easter baskets of the faithful.



Celebrating the Radiant Resurrection

ST. GREGORY IN UPPER ST. CLAIR, PA.



Father Valerian Michlik is pastor of St. Gregory in Upper St. Clair, Pa.

SS. PETER AND PAUL IN TARENTUM, PA.

By Father Vasyl Polyak
SS. Peter and Paul, Tarentum, Pa.

Easter time and the egg hunt was full of blessings, joy and happiness at SS. Peter and Paul in Tarentum, Pa.

The gift will keep memories of our loving and merciful Lord in time of his Glorious Resurrection. ■



ASCENSION OF OUR LORD IN CLAIRTON, PA.

Ascension of Our Lord in Clairton, Pa. held their basket blessings in the church this year.

Food was blessed on Saturday evening and Sunday morning after Liturgies. Father Ivan Mina

blessed the food and baskets with the assistance of Michael Sowko and altar server William Kerr.

Easter flowers were arranged by Karen Kerr. ■



INFANT JESUS OF PRAGUE IN BOARDMAN, OHIO

By Paul Slemmons
Infant Jesus of Prague, Boardman, Ohio

Father Michael Farynets of Infant Jesus of Prague in Boardman, Ohio blessed Easter

Baskets following Resurrection Matins and Easter Liturgy. A tradition that the parishioners of the church continue to enjoy and carry on. ■



ST. MARY ASSUMPTION IN NEW SALEM, PA.

By Bernadette Karoffa
St. Mary Assumption, New Salem, Pa.

The parishioners of St. Mary Assumption Church in New Salem, Pa. had their Easter baskets blessed following the Resurrection services on the evening of March 30.

Parishioners from other churches brought their baskets and joined us in this beautiful Easter tradition.

Father Christopher Burke blessed baskets on Holy Saturday after Resurrection Matins. He was assisted by cantor Rick Gaydos and altar server Richard Kormanik. ■



Photos by John Kormanik

Celebrating the Radiant Resurrection

ST. MARY IN YOUNGSTOWN, OHIO



Very Reverend Richard Lambert blessed parishioners' Easter baskets, filled with ethnic foods and family traditions.



Deacon John Welch delivered the Easter message from Metropolitan Archbishop William Skurla to the faithful of St. Mary.



Very Reverend Richard Lambert asked St. Mary's parishioners and family the St. Mary's congregation to approach and receive the Holy Eucharist of the Risen Christ.



St. Mary's parishioners and family gathered to take part in the tradition of the Easter basket blessing.

ST. NICHOLAS IN GREENSBURG, PA.

By John Gomolak
St. Nicholas, Greensburg, Pa.

Rev. Regis Dusecina blessed baskets following the Resurrection Service on Easter Saturday.

The following Sunday a St. Thomas lunch was held in the church hall. Great food was enjoyed by everyone. ■



ST. STEPHEN IN LEISENRING, PA.

By Bob Gillingham
St. Stephen, Leisenring, Pa.

Christos Voskrese! The Easter season of 2024, with its important preparation activities of The Great Fast, is over. The parishioners of St. Stephen in Leisenring, Pa., smallish in number, are quietly and humbly feeling a tremendous sense of satisfaction over their whole-hearted participation in activities leading up to the Resurrection of Our Lord and Savior.

Our pastor, Father Jerry Botsko, worked diligently at reminding us of the mandates of almsgiving, prayer, and fasting to bring us closer to Christ. These duties were regularly discussed as parts of his homilies leading up to the Great Fast on the successive Sundays of Zacchaeus, the Publican and Pharisee, the Prodigal Son, and then Meatfare and Cheesefare. As well, Father Jerry offered nearly unlimited opportunities for the Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession). However, our greatest involvement with the meaning of preparation for the Resurrection came with the consistent weekly attendance at the Liturgy of PreSanctified Gifts. Our numbers were good for the size of parish we are, and this was reinforced by Father Jerry, at the end of each Liturgy, thanking all for coming and complimenting us for our commitment.

As usual, Good Friday was memorable. Various

parishioners erected our burial cave, which emulates the one in which Jesus was buried. The highlight, however, was the procession to the cave with Father Jerry wearing the shroud (see picture below). He was supported by our current altar server Stephen and previous altar servers Chris and Danny. At the end of the service, all made their way to the cave to recognize the death of Jesus and to relate personally to His death for us. Strikingly, most parishioners approached the shroud on their knees from long distances. It was surprising to note that this reverential custom has not fallen away to "modernity."

After Good Friday, Holy Saturday is nearly an anomaly. We know what has so tragically transpired yesterday, but also know what is to come. At the Holy Saturday service, the emotions of St. Stephen's parishioners were high, somewhat ecstatic. Because of the heavy rain in the Leisenring area, our procession took place indoors. And then — the blessing of the baskets! At this point in the Byzantine Lenten experience, the food smells wonderful! Father Jerry blessed all baskets. At the end he remarked how tantalizing the food smelled and offered that he is very partial to kolbassi.

Easter Sunday was very well attended by both regular and sometimes seen parishioners. The refrain of "Christ is Risen..." sounded through the church, and everybody seemed to understand the gift that Jesus Christ had given us through his crucifixion. ■





Celebrating the Radiant Resurrection

HOLY TRINITY IN WALL, PA.

Father Don Bolls blessed baskets at Holy Trinity in Wall, Pa. ■



CHURCH OF THE RESURRECTION IN MONROEVILLE, PA.

Father Don Bolls blessed baskets at Church of the Resurrection in Monroeville, Pa. ■



ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST IN SCOTTTDALE, PA.

Breaking bread

The ladies of St. John the Baptist in Scottsdale, Pa. made paska for the Easter season last month. More than 90 loaves were made.

Pictured are: Cindy Hribal, Barb Zaksek, Catherine Catalina, Betty Sapola, Dorothy Kozak, Anita Wisniewski and Kathy Onusko. Also helping were Terry Frederick and his wife, Janice. ■



ST. ELIAS IN MUNHALL, PA.

Father Vitallii Stashkevych celebrated Resurrection Matins and blessed baskets at St. Elias in Munhall, Pa. ■



Easter Monday Liturgy with Procession and reading of the Gospels at St. Elias in Munhall, Pa. ■



Palm Sunday

ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST CATHEDRAL IN MUNHALL, PA.

Metropolitan Archbishop William C. Skurla blessed palms and willow branches following the Saturday and Sunday Divine Liturgies.

Very Rev. Andrew Deskevich

officiated the Saturday Vigil Liturgy and Metropolitan Archbishop William celebrated the Sunday Liturgy with Very Rev. Andrew assisting. ■



ST. STEPHEN IN NORTH HUNTINGDON, PA.

Father Vasyl Yakubych blesses the faithful on Palm Sunday at St. Stephen in North Huntingdon, Pa. ■



HOLY GHOST IN MCKEES ROCKS, PA.

Father Frank Firko and Subdeacon Luke Iyengar celebrated Palm Sunday at Holy Ghost in McKees Rocks, Pa. ■



ST. GREGORY IN UPPER ST. CLAIR, PA.

By Father Valerian Michlik
St. Gregory, Upper St. Clair, Pa.

Palm Sunday has become very festive at St. Gregory. At the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy, the faithful received blessed palm and willow branches.

Afterwards we all gathered in our Church Hall where several tables were dedicated to our St. Gregory's children. Our children had opportunities to create their own Easter basket, spring decorations, different Easter crafts, and to decorate their own Easter eggs.

We also express our sincere thanks to our St. Gregory Men's Club for sponsoring the Easter Kielbasa Sale which has been for many years a food item enjoyed by many in our area.

Members of our Bethany Ministry were also busy preparing Easter baskets for our homebound parishioners that will be delivered to them during this upcoming Holy Week.

This was a wonderful celebration as we sang together "Hosanna, blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!" ■





Palm Sunday

SS. PETER AND PAUL IN DUQUESNE, PA.

Father David Abernethy blessed palms and pussywillows on Palm Sunday at SS. Peter and Paul in Duquesne, Pa. ■



ASCENSION OF OUR LORD IN CLAIRTON, PA.

On Palm Sunday, Ascension of Our Lord Church in Clairton, Pa. held an Easter event for the children.

It was a beautiful sunny day as the Easter Bunny was waiting to surprise everyone as they came out of church. He helped the

children search for eggs that were hidden in the grass and bushes by the church.

After finding eggs and treats, the children worked on Easter crafts and colored wooden eggs. Afterward, everyone enjoyed a light lunch. ■



ST. ELIAS IN MUNHALL, PA.

Father Vitalii Stashkevych blessed palms and willows on Palm Sunday at St. Elias in Munhall, Pa. ■



ASCENSION OF OUR LORD IN CLAIRTON, PA.

St. Patrick's Day celebration

On March 17, Ascension of Our Lord Church in Clairton, Pa. celebrated St. Patrick's Day.

A special green silk carnation

was presented to all of the ladies before Liturgy. Following Liturgy, everyone was treated to green shamrock cookies. ■



ST. JOSEPH IN TORONTO, OHIO

Renaissance of spiritual activity

By Father John Kapitan Jr., OFM St. Joseph, Toronto, Ohio

Over the past 13 months, a renaissance of pastoral and spiritual activity has occurred at St. Joseph in Toronto. Ohio, a community of faith that has been praying in Toronto since 1901. We may be small in number, but our parish myrrh bearers continue to serve the secular and spiritual communities near and far!

In early Feb. 2023, the pastor of Saint Joseph was approached by another Eastern Catholic community to prayerfully share St. Joseph. With the benevolence of both the Melkite Bishop, His Grace + Francois and His Eminence + William, the Steubenville Melkite Catholic community has been able to grow through the prayerful use of St. Joseph for their Sunday Divine Liturgy and agape meal since the last Sunday of April 2023.

The close cooperation between the pastors of both St. Joseph and the Melkite Catholics enabled the mutual prayerful celebration of Forgiveness Vespers on Cheesefare Sunday 2024.

The Protection of the Theotokos Guild has been able to continue the annual spring and fall fund raising efforts through their nut roll and pascha bread sales. The Guild has been diligently working behind the scenes since 2019 and they have also received financial support from the GCU.

In Sept. 2023, through the benevolence of His Eminence + William, the parish received the services of then Father Deacon Timothy Fariss. He was able to continue his work with the



Fathers John Kapitan Jr. and Timothy Fariss with altar server Declan McCann.

campus ministry efforts of both Pittsburgh and Steubenville.

He was able to provide new ideas for the benefit of the local and larger communities. He was able to assist the pastor in the celebration of liturgical services, long dormant, to the spiritual and prayerful benefit of the parishioners. This increased the demand for these services, and they are now being celebrated more frequently.

On the afternoon of April 7, the parish's deacon, the now Reverend Father Timothy Fariss, was elevated to the Presbyterate. This was achieved by His Eminence + William laying his hands on the former deacon.

As the Lord has said: where two or three are gathered in faith, I am there with you!

Over the past 13 months, the parishioners of St. Joseph have benefited immensely through the benevolence of His Eminence + William who on April 18 celebrated his 12th anniversary of his enthronement as the Metropolitan Archbishop of Pittsburgh. ■

Great and Holy Friday

ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST CATHEDRAL IN MUNHALL, PA.

Metropolitan Archbishop William C. Skurla officiated the Holy Friday Entombment Vespers Service at St. John the Baptist Cathedral in Munhall, Pa. Very Rev. Andrew Deskevich,

Father Tom Dansak and Father Anthony Constantino assisted with the Vespers and an outdoor procession of the attending parish faithful. ■



ST. GREGORY IN UPPER ST. CLAIR, PA.

Parishioners at St. Gregory in Upper St. Clair process in front of the church on Great and Holy Friday. Father Valerian Michlik is pastor. ■



ST. ELIAS IN MUNHALL, PA.

Father Vitalii Stashkevych celebrated Great and Holy Friday at St. Elias in Munhall, Pa. ■



Great and Holy Thursday

ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST CATHEDRAL IN MUNHALL, PA.

The Seminary Community joined Archbishop William at St. John the Baptist Cathedral in Munhall, Pa. on Holy Thursday for the celebration of the Divine Liturgy of St. Basil with vespers, which included the ceremonial washing of the feet by Metropolitan Archbishop William C. Skurla. ■



Photos by Nick Havrilla Sr.



HOLY GHOST IN MCKEES ROCKS, PA.

Gift of Mary

By Maria Iyengar
Holy Ghost, McKees Rocks, Pa.

In the fall, Holy Ghost McKees Rocks Youth Group participated in a talk given by a young woman from Gift of Mary, an organization with a shelter for homeless women in downtown Pittsburgh.

The Youth Group, and all who attended, were deeply touched by the talk and discussed doing

something to assist in this ministry.

During the Great Fast the Youth Group performed a form of almsgiving by collecting items this ministry needs to assist the women they serve.

The parish was very generous in their donations and the Youth Group will deliver items collected to the shelter. ■



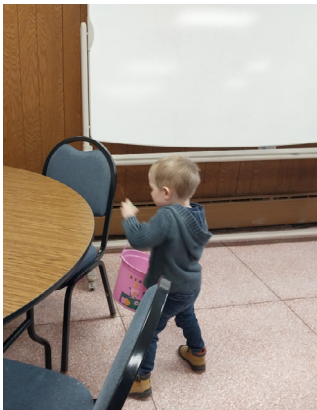
HOLY GHOST IN MCKEES ROCKS, PA.

Easter Egg Hunt

By Maria Iyengar
Holy Ghost, McKees Rocks, Pa.

Holy Ghost parishes in McKees Rocks, Pa. and North Side, Pa. held their annual Easter Egg Hunt on Sunday, March 24.

Members of the Youth Group hid the eggs and the young children of the parishes hunted them. All the children had a great time. ■



ST. MICHAEL IN HERMITAGE, PA.

Teamwork makes the dream work

By Rozanne Voisey
St. Michael, Hermitage, Pa.

The Lenten Ethnic Food & Bake Sale, sponsored by SMART (St. Michael's Activity & Recreation Team), held Wednesday, March 6 far exceeded our goals! Special thanks to our parishioners and friends from the community who patronized the sale for these cherished ethnic foods and baked goods!

We would like to extend a round of "thank you's" to the following groups for whom this event would not be possible!

Pirohy makers: Mary Anne Bajorek, Marcie Gates, Alyson Hunter, Marcia Hunter, Debbie Kudelko, Samantha Kudelko, Lucy Mallick, Renee Manilla, Sherry Marriotti, Barbara Seman Ochs, Kristin Piccirilli, Megan Pisarcik, Bob and Mary Ann Polochak, Kathleen Porsch, Christine Sartori, Mary Seibel, Julie Ruth Shaw, Cheryl and Russell Semchee, Brenda and Dan Tomko, Patty and Randy Tomko, Rozanne and Lew Voisey, Jeff Volsko, and Lori and Mark Wansack; all

under the direction of our wonderful team leader, Donna Volsko!

Halushki makers: Mary Anne Bajorek, Bill Dzuricsko, Lucy Mallick, Sherry Marriotti, Bob and Mary Ann Polochak, Betty and Nick Simko, Lew and Rozanne Voisey, and Donna and Jeff Volsko; all under the direction of our team leaders Renee and Jim Manilla!

Sales team: Mary Anne Bajorek, Bill Dzuricsko, Lucy Mallick, Renee Manilla, Sherry Marriotti, Bob and Mary Ann Polochak, John Schaner, Cheryl and Russell Semchee, Betty and Nick Simko, Brenda Tomko, Rozanne Voisey and Donna and Jeff Volsko!

In addition, special thanks to our parishioners who made monetary and food donations to help lessen the expenses! We really appreciate your generosity! To Bob Polochak for wheeling, dealing, and picking up food purchases! Christine Campbell and Bill Dzuricsko for taking phone orders! To all our very talented St. Michael's bakers for their many delectable goodies they provided! Thank you to Father Kevin Marks for his support! Lending hands! Lifting hearts! ■



ST. GREGORY IN UPPER ST. CLAIR, PA.

Easter Egg Hunt

By Father Valerian Michlik
St. Gregory, Upper St. Clair, Pa.

On Thomas Sunday, April 7, we were truly blessed with beautiful weather for this year's Easter Egg Hunt.

At the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy the children enjoyed racing on the parish grounds looking and filling

their bags with those hidden eggs. Afterward, we continued in our Church Hall with our Thomas Sunday Potluck luncheon which was enjoyed by all.

As we continue the Paschalia-Easter season, we look forward to the upcoming events that bring us together as a parish family. ■



A Night at the Lanes

By Father Valerian Michlik
St. Gregory, Upper St. Clair, Pa.

With Bright Week being cold and wet, we were ready on Friday evening, April 5 to have some fun at AMF Mt. Lebanon Lanes. This annual event organized by our Men's Club

not only offers a chance to bowl, and we do have some excellent bowlers, but offers that fellowship which helps build our parish community.

Laughter, cheers, smiles, and good food were enjoyed by all who came for this parish event. We all had a great time! ■



ST. STEPHEN IN LEISENRING, PA.

Happy birthday, Father Jerome!

By Bob Gillingham
St. Stephen, Leisenring, Pa.

April 15 is commonly known as Tax Day, yet it also has an even more notable designation, that being the birthday of St. Stephen's Father Jerome Botsko.

To celebrate Father Jerry, the parishioners of St. Stephen held a social in the church hall after the Divine Liturgy on Sunday, April 14. Coffee, an assortment of soft drinks, and a large chocolate and vanilla sheet cake were served.

Father Jerry led parishioners in singing "Christ is Risen," which was followed by a whole-hearted rendition of the Happy Birthday song.

A highlight of the affair was the attendance of Father David Bosnich, who treated everyone by singing "Christ is Risen" in Church Slavonic.

Father Jerry, originally from Donora, Pa., is proud to point out that he is the twin brother of +Sister Mary Ann Botsko (1955-2020), a Sister Servant of Mary Immaculate who was in the religious life for 39 years. Father



Jerry related that he was the first-born twin at approximately 12:30 a.m. on April 15, making +Sister Mary Ann his younger sibling. Father Jerry's older brother, +John Michael, fell asleep in the Lord earlier this year.

In addition to St. Stephen, Father Jerry also serves as Chaplain for the Order of Sisters of St. Basil the Great at Mt. St. Macrina in Uniontown, Pa.

The photographs show Father Jerry and Father David posing amidst several happy participants and also various attendees enjoying the social.

Congratulations, Father Jerry! May God grant you many more years! ■

INFANT JESUS OF PRAGUE IN BOARDMAN, OHIO

Easter Egg Hunt

By Paul Slemmons
Infant Jesus of Prague, Boardman, Ohio

On Palm Sunday, the children of Infant Jesus of Prague in Boardman, Ohio had their annual Easter Egg Hunt.

Following the Easter Egg Hunt, families took pictures with our

special guest the Easter Bunny (Emma Boucher).

The event was sponsored by the parish's Byzantine Social Club and the Altar & Rosary Society. Everyone truly enjoyed the event. ■





THOUGHTS FOR OUR DAY

By Archpriest David M. Petras

MARRIAGE, THE CHURCH AND THE WORLD




The other six sacraments are exclusively mysteries of the Church, celebrated by liturgical rites of the Church.

Marriage, however, is universal to humanity, to all religions and even to non-believers. It is a commitment of two people to one another. Its function in human history is to stabilize family life, provide for the procreation of the human race, foster love and the proper raising of children. As an institution, it precedes the establishment of the Church. It is transformed into a sacrament by being taken up into God's life, becoming not only human love but a particular manifestation of God's love for his people, maintaining its natural purpose but adding to it the grace of God for our sanctification and deification. In Scripture, it exists from creation, "a man leaves his father and mother and clings to his wife, and the two of them become one body. (Genesis 2:24)" Jesus was to teach, "'Have you not read that from the beginning the Creator 'made them male and female' and said, 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'? So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore, what God has joined together, no human being must separate. (Matthew 19:4-6)" Usually, the Church locates the foundation of marriage as a sacramental mystery in the blessing of the marriage in Cana of Galilee (John 2:1-11). St. Paul, also quoting Genesis

reflects, "This is a great mystery, but I speak in reference to Christ and the church. (Ephesians 5:32)"

The coming of Christ, then, has transformed the meaning of marriage for the world. It is no longer simply a natural union, but has become a part of God's infinite love for all his creation. It is now a part of the story of how God elevates his people


The coming of Christ, then, has transformed the meaning of marriage for the world.

and of how he brings us into his divine life. The rite of marriage expresses this clearly. The priest prays "You blessed your servant Abraham; and, making Sarah fertile, you made him the father of a multitude of nations. You gave Isaac to Rebekah and blessed her childbearing. You joined Jacob to Rachel and from him brought forth the twelve patriarchs. You united Joseph to Asenath and gave them Ephraim and Manasseh as the fruit of their procreation and, accepting Zechariah and Elizabeth, you brought forth their child the Forerunner. From the root of Jesse you made the ever-virgin spring forth according to the flesh and from her you took flesh

and were born for the salvation of the human race." Of course, in all marriages which produce offspring, the couple share with God the joy of creation. For the Christian, the couple are united in God in the gift of new life, giving not only physical existence, but a new person alive in faith in God. Not only creation, but the love of the two people are brought into God's plan of salvation by name: "Now, O Master, do stretch forth Name), for you alone join woman to man. Join them in oneness of mind, crown them in love, unite them in one flesh."

In addition, the love of marriage is now made into a model of God's love for all humanity. This is the deep meaning of St. Paul's letter to the Ephesians, read at the marriage rite, "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ loved the church and handed himself over for her to sanctify her, cleansing her by the bath of water with the word, that he might present to himself the church in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish ... For no one hates his own flesh but rather nourishes and cherishes it, even as Christ does the church, because we are members of his body. (Ephesians 5:25-27.29-30)" In the Gospel of St. John, John the Baptist identifies Christ as the bridegroom of the Church, who gives himself for the life of the world and to create the Church as his mystical body. The Baptist says, "The one who has the bride is the bridegroom; the best man, who stands and listens to him, rejoices greatly at the bridegroom's voice. So this joy of mine has been made complete.

(John 3:29)" This is confirmed in the Gospel of St. Matthew with the parable of the wise virgins, "the kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. (Matthew 25:1)" This is the theme in the Book of Revelation: "Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory. For the wedding day of the Lamb has come, his bride has made herself ready I also saw the holy city, a new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. (Revelation 17:9; 21:2)"

This reality of the Church as the bride of Christ is celebrated in the Liturgy of the Church especially in Holy Week. In the first three days, the morning service is called Bridegroom Matins, and we sing, "Behold, the Bridegroom is coming in the middle of the night. (Troparion)" This theme then continues through all of Holy Week. On Good Friday, the Oikos of Matins puts these words into the mouth of our Lord's mother, Mary, "Are you going to another wedding in Cana?" Indeed, the "Bridegroom of the Church" goes to the cross to die for his bride, to bring us life and resurrection. Finally on Pascha itself, we chant, "Today, Christ has shown forth from the tomb as from a bridal chamber," having accomplished the mystical marriage of Christ and the Church in the fullness of life. In this way, we see the double mystery: marriage itself has become a sacrament of the love of God for his people, and human marriage has been taken up into God's plan of salvation. ■

PARISH LITURGIES BROADCAST VIA INTERNET

Here is the most current list of parishes broadcasting Sunday Divine Liturgies and other services to the Faithful via their websites and social media sites such as Facebook.

For changes or to be listed, send information to bcw@archpitt.org.

**St. John the Baptist Cathedral
Munhall, Pa.**
www.stjohnsbyzantinecathedral.com

**Holy Ghost
McKees Rocks, Pa.**
www.holyghost-byzantinecatholic.org
www.youtube.com, then type Holy Ghost Church Live Stream

**St. John Chrysostom
Pittsburgh, Pa.**
www.sjcbcc.com

**St. Gregory
Upper St. Clair, Pa.**
www.facebook.com/stgregoryusc

**St. Michael
Campbell, Ohio**
www.facebook.com/st.michaelbyz.campbell

**St. Elias
Munhall, Pa.**
www.facebook.com/StEliasByzantineCatholicChurch/

**SS. Peter and Paul
Braddock, Pa.**
<https://www.facebook.com/SSPeterPaulBraddock/>


**St. Michael
Hermitage, Pa.**
<https://www.facebook.com/stmichaelbyz.hermitage>

**St. Mary
Windber, Pa.**
<https://www.facebook.com/StMaryDormition>



BIBLE TRAINING WORKSHOP
PRESENTER: DEACON JOHN HARDEN
 DIRECTOR OF EASTERN CATHOLIC FORMATION AND EVANGELIZATION,
 EPARCHY OF PARMA

A senior project manager at Ascension Press Media, Deacon John has served as an adjunct professor of Theology at Neumann University in Aston, PA. He has a Bachelor's degree in Theology from Benedictine College in Atchison, KS, and a Master's degree in Theology from Franciscan University in Steubenville, OH.



"Happy the people who know you, Lord."
Psalm 89:16

ARCHEPARCHY OF PITTSBURGH
 OFFICE OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION
JULY 12-14, 2024
 LOCATION:
 SS. CYRIL & METHODIUS
 BYZANTINE CATHOLIC SEMINARY
 (ACCOMODATIONS OFF CAMPUS)

Brochures for registration and accomodations will be available soon

Do you accept the invite?

AROUND THE ARCHEPARCHY



CRAFT & VENDOR SHOW/FLEA MARKET — St. Pius X, 2336 Brownsville Road, Carrick, Pa. Annual Craft & Vendor Show: 9 a.m.-3 p.m. May 4. Tables are \$30 each. Rummage Sale/Flea Market: 10 a.m.-3 p.m. May 18. Tables are \$20 each. Call the church at 412-881-8344 or Pat Geary at 412-759-2024 to rent a table for events.

ICONOGRAPHY WORKSHOP — Marylyn Barone will conduct an iconography workshop for adults at all levels of experience. This workshop is May 30-June 3 at Resurrection Byzantine Catholic Church in Monroeville, Pa. You will write an icon of Saint Peregrine or Saint Nectarios, both patron saints of cancer. The classes will be Thursday evening, Friday evening, all day Saturday and Sunday, noon until finishing. You must be able to attend all four days to have a completed icon. The cost of \$145 will cover all supplies: All icons will be on an 8 x 10 gesso covered board. Using a pre-prepared prototype, you will learn techniques for faces, garments, 23 karat gold gilding and background. The theology of iconography and specifically the two icons will also be presented. There will be the opportunity to attend services. Snacks as well as coffee and tea will be provided on all days. A deposit of \$25 is required and the class will be limited to 15 people. For further information, call Marylyn Barone at 412-678-9453 or email her at mwbarone@comcast.net.

FAITH AND FUN DAY — Information on a date and time for year's Faith and Fun Day for altar servers of the Archeparchy of Pittsburgh will be available soon. The day will be highlighted by a Pittsburgh Pirates game at PNC Park.



GCU Byzantine Family Day at Kennywood Park Thursday, July 25

11 a.m. to 9 p.m.
Kennywood Amusement Park
 4800 Kennywood Blvd., West Mifflin, Pa. 15122
 Tickets will be available May 17
<https://gcuusa.com>

CONTACT US
Fraternal Communications Department
 1-800-722-4428 x 3810 or cchamberlain@GCUusa.com

LITURGICAL SCHEDULE AT THE SEMINARY

"COME, LET US SING JOYFULLY TO THE LORD"



For the Liturgical Schedule for May at the Byzantine Catholic Seminary of SS. Cyril and Methodius, 3605 Perrysville Ave., Pittsburgh, Pa., click on the online version of the The Byzantine Catholic World at archpitt.org.

DATES TO REMEMBER



MAY 9
 Feast of the Ascension of our Lord
Chancery closed

MAY 12
 Mother's Day

MAY 19
 Pentecost Sunday

MAY 27
 Memorial Day
Chancery closed

JUNE 3 TO 4
 Clergy Days
St. John the Baptist Cathedral, Munhall, Pa.

See more upcoming events at www.archpitt.org



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