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CLERGY, FAITHFUL TRAVEL TO ST. MARY IN WHITING, IND.
FOR THIRD BYZANTINE CATHOLIC ASSEMBLY



The Byzantine Assembly, held July 16 to 20 in the Eparchy of Parma at St. Mary Byzantine Catholic Church in Whiting, Ind., attended by Metropolitan Archbishop William C. Skurla, bishops, priests, and faithful, included a procession through the town's streets. For more photos, see page 4.

*By The Byzantine Catholic
Archeparchy of Pittsburgh*

The 2025 Byzantine Assembly was held July 16 to 20 in the Eparchy of Parma at St. Mary Byzantine Catholic Church in Whiting, Ind.

The five-day Assembly featured presentations, discussions, and time for fellowship.

Participants were surprised on July 19 to receive a message from Pope Leo XIV (see below).

Archbishop Michel Jalakh, secretary of the Vatican's Dicastery for the Eastern Churches, read the pope's message to those present.

Message of the Holy Father Leo XIV to the participants in the Third Metropolitan Assembly of the Byzantine Catholic Archeparchy of Pittsburgh:

I extend heartfelt greetings

to all of you gathered for the Third Assembly of the Byzantine Catholic Church of Pittsburgh, convoked by Metropolitan Archbishop William Skurla and the Council of Hierarchs, taking place at the Church of Saint Mary in Whiting, Indiana.

Your Assembly, held under the theme Come, let us worship and bow before Christ, offers a precious opportunity to grow in unity and to reaffirm your commitment to the Lord. Through your liturgical celebrations, prayerful reflection and fraternal dialogue, you will surely renew your faithful witness to Christ and deepen your proclamation of the Gospel in the rich tradition of the Byzantine Catholic Churches.

The participation of clergy, religious, and lay faithful, along with representatives from the Exarchate of Toronto and the Dicastery for the Eastern

Churches, offers a visible sign of communion in the Church.

I give thanks for the witness of your forebears, who built vibrant Byzantine communities in North America amidst various challenges and uncertainty. Their legacy continues in your courageous embrace of pastoral renewal, which is rooted in fidelity to your heritage.

I assure you of my spiritual closeness and entrust your gathering to the intercession of Mary the Mother of God. To all participating in the Assembly, I gladly impart my Apostolic Blessing, which I extend to all in the Archeparchy as a pledge of wisdom, joy and peace in the Lord.

From the Vatican, 12 July 2025

LEO PP. XIV ■

"Mary Look Upon Us..."

91ST PILGRIMAGE TO BE
HELD AUG. 29 TO SEPT. 1
AT MOUNT ST. MACRINA

*By Sister Elaine Kisinko, OSBM
Secretary to the Archbishop*



Asking for help is not always an easy thing to do. We might be embarrassed that we cannot

complete a task, be unable to handle some object, or decipher or understand some written words. We are usually grateful to those people who kindly come to our aid. When it comes to our prayer lives, however, we never stand alone. God the Father, Jesus, Mary His Mother, the angels and saints always listen, hear us and help us.

Sometimes our prayers vary in intensity from bright, light and happy words of thanksgiving to dark and painful pleas of hurt and anguish. We might have special places where we appreciate spending time with our Lord whether that be with words or in silence.

A great gift of time and place for prayer is, of course, the 91st annual Pilgrimage to the Shrine of Our Lady of Perpetual Help at Mount Saint Macrina in Uniontown, Pa., this year over the Labor Day weekend from Aug. 29 to Sept. 1. As always, it is truly a time set apart for our spiritual growth, renewal and refreshment.

It seems that difficulties can evoke people to ask in prayer for heavenly intervention and help. People turn to God in prayer. When thinking of our country and our world today, it is obvious that prayer is greatly needed. Increasing violence, unending wars, disregard for human life, natural and unnatural disasters,

Story continued on page 3



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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.

THE SISTERS OF ST. BASIL THE GREAT

Sister Barbara Swindells celebrates 70 years of Religious Life

*By The Sisters of St. Basil the Great
Mount St. Macrina, Uniontown, Pa.*

Jubilees are an opportunity for all of our Sisters to thank God for the gift of their vocations. On Sunday, June 22, we had such an opportunity to celebrate with Sister Barbara Swindells the 70th anniversary of her religious life.

Metropolitan Archbishop William C. Skurla offered the Divine Liturgy of Thanksgiving.

In his homily, Archbishop William noted that the Gospel was particularly fitting since it was about the call of the Apostles. Like these apostles, Sister Barbara answered the invitation to follow Jesus and did so faithfully over the course of many years.

Sister Barbara entered the community from St. Mary Church in Chicago, Ill. For over 20 years, her energy was devoted to education from the elementary level through high school, at times serving as principal or assistant principal. Following these years, Sister was involved in a variety of ministries, ranging from Religious Education to administration on the local level and as Provincial Councillor.

Sister Barbara spent many years as manager of Mount St. Macrina Cemetery. She oversaw the reorganization of vast cemetery documents and had the foresight to initiate the Cemetery Integrated Management System, a computerized mapping system.

Sister Barbara directed a further expansion of the cemetery and the



Sister Susan Sisko, OSBM; Sister Barbara Swindells, OSBM; and Metropolitan Archbishop William C. Skurla.

renewal of the Bishop's crypt area, while simultaneously caring for the many unseen but meticulous details required of management.

Presently, Sister Barbara schedules the requested Divine Liturgy intentions.

At the festive meal following the Liturgy, Sister Susan Sisko, OSBM, Provincial, thanked Sister Barbara for her fidelity to her vocation and her life of faithful service. Each Sister also offered her congratulations to our Jubilarian, taking the opportunity to share memories of years gone by. Sister Barbara also shared a few remarks, thanking the sisters for all they did to make her celebration so joyful.

May God grant to Sister Barbara many spiritually fruitful, blessed, and happy years! ■



BULLETIN BOARD

Pilgrimage Preparation Day

Help the Sisters prepare for Pilgrimage by volunteering for Pilgrimage Preparation Day on Saturday, Aug. 16.

Volunteers are asked to meet at the Trinity Center at 9:30 a.m.

Please bring brooms, weed whackers, blowers, weeding tools,

rakes, and clippers. Lunch will be provided.

The rain date will be Saturday, Aug. 23.

For further information, please get in touch with Sister Joanne at 724-438-8644. ■



The Byzantine Catholic Archeparchy of Pittsburgh is on Facebook

Glory to Jesus Christ!

We are excited to announce that our Byzantine Catholic Archeparchy of Pittsburgh now has an official Facebook page! You can find us under "Archeparchy of Pittsburgh" or click here: <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61576670981137>

This will be a platform for us to stay connected and share important news and updates; we'll be posting about upcoming events and encouraging messages, as well as fostering and sharing the

beauty of our Byzantine tradition and learning more about our archeparchy.

If your office or parish is having an event you would like to promote, please let us know so we can post it on FB! :) Reach out to Viktoria Zolnova (Youth and Young Adult Ministry Coordinator) via email: events@archpitt.org to share the details.

Don't forget to follow our Facebook page and help us spread the word among our faithful followers and friends! Your support means a lot to us. Thank you!

REFLECTION FROM MOUNT ST. MACRINA

Discerning your vocation

By Sister Barbara Jean Mihalchick, OSBM



*This is a transcript
of her July 13, 2025
reflection, which
can be viewed at
www.facebook.com/sistersofstbasil.uniontown.*

Glory to Jesus Christ!

One of the reasons I have been serving the Lord in the religious life is because of circumstances, you might say. Just as I was becoming a teenager, my family moved from the big city to a little town and – providentially – right next to the Byzantine Catholic Church.

Yes, of course, I got involved in its mission, its reality, and came to understand that I liked helping there. That was certainly a part of my discernment to join a religious community. They serve always in the churches and beyond.

We want to spend some concentrated time on fostering and praying for vocations.

How does one discern a vocation? First of all, the providential arrangement of circumstances I just mentioned, for instance, was a part of mine but it's a part of many.

The realities of life enter into the picture. Am I a healthy person? Can I make the contacts? Kinds of realities I need to face.

Thirdly, our own limitations and potential: Have I the abilities? The talents? Can I, will I develop them?

What about the historic moment? Where is it in my lifetime? It doesn't happen for everybody right after high school. There are other historic moments in life that may bring this Call to greater concentration.

Last of all, our emotional, intellectual, psychological gifts and needs.

All of this, encompassed and aided and influenced by Grace. God's Grace. The Call of the Holy Spirit is at work, if we pray, if we seek. It's important to remember that "vocation" – the word for "calling" – is something for every baptized person. We are all "called" to, obligated to, the mission of Christ, the mission of His Church.

So, at all ages this prayer to understand my role is a part of Christian life. You may become involved in an organization that reaches out to the needy in one way or another. It may be by God's providence that you may have a role to play within that group that serves those who need the message of God's love, mercy, and grace.

Let us pray, especially, for vocations of all kinds for the love of God to reach the hearts of those who seek the Lord's help!

God bless you. ■



“Mary Look Upon Us...”

91ST ANNUAL PILGRIMAGE IN HONOR OF OUR LADY OF PERPETUAL HELP SET FOR AUG. 29 TO SEPT. 1

Story continued from page 1

and the list could go on and on. Please make an effort, if you are able, to bring your blessed presence to the Pilgrimage. Kindly come with your favorite prayers and hymns. Come to join the others in the prayer and song of our holy and beautiful Church. We Sisters are grateful for each Pilgrim, from the youngest to the oldest who for four unique days

will gather with our Bishops, Clergy and each other to ask in hope for the help we need, both personal and for the healing of our country and our world. We pray that the many people from near and far, united in the prayer, faith and tradition of our treasured Byzantine Catholic Church will travel to Mount Saint Macrina in Uniontown, Pa. safely to receive the grace of God which awaits them there. ■



NOTES:

- Please note: Curfew is 11 p.m.
- Although casual attire is acceptable, Pilgrims are asked to be mindful of the religious nature of services and activities and to dress appropriately. Thank you!
- In order to provide and maintain a safe environment for children and youth attending the 89th annual Pilgrimage, a vital set of guidelines has been established regarding minors under the age of 18 who come to the Pilgrimage unaccompanied by a parent(s). Prior to Pilgrimage, parents must have completed and submitted two forms on behalf of each minor participating in supervised Pilgrimage activities: These forms, posted on our website, are: (1) Parental Consent and Waiver Liability Form and (2) Medical Matters Form. Completed forms may be dropped off at the Welcome Desk in front of the House of Prayer.
- Forms, further guidelines and information may also be obtained at the Information Desk in the House of Prayer.

“Theotokos, Icon of Hope”

By Sister Susan Sisko, OSBM Provincial



Glory to Jesus Christ!

We are “Pilgrims of Hope.” Pope Francis chose this theme of hope for the Jubilee with a clear understanding of the world situation. One does not need to look far to find areas throughout our world in need of hope, in need of God’s healing presence.

Our 91st Pilgrimage in honor of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, with the theme “Theotokos, Icon of Hope,” once again draws us close to the Mother of God, as a beacon of hope in a world troubled by storms that rage all around us. She is the lighthouse that leads us to the safe shores of her Son, Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

We sisters are excited and honored to welcome you to Mt. St. Macrina for the 91st Annual Pilgrimage to the Shrine of Our Lady of Perpetual Help this Labor Day weekend.

We kindly ask for your patience this year, as Mt. St. Macrina is under a bit of construction, as the sisters prepare to move into our “new” monastery at the end of this year. The Shrine of OLPH will, as always, be available to our pilgrims, to offer your prayers and petitions, as well as your thanksgiving for all of the benefits bestowed on you and your family throughout the year. We thank you in advance for respecting the much-needed precautions for the safety of all involved due to construction.

We sisters hope and pray that this 91st Pilgrimage is favored with good weather, and that all of you, our beloved Pilgrims, are blessed with safe travels, as you return to your spiritual home here, at Mt. St. Macrina.

May Our Loving Theotokos, Icon of Hope, guide you and protect you, and continue to lead you to her Divine Son.

In the love of the Lord,

Sister Susan Sisko, OSBM Provincial

PILGRIMAGE 2025 SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Friday, August 29

- 6:30 p.m. **COMPLINE** and **BLESSING OF WATER** at Lourdes Shrine
- 8:30 a.m.-Noon **MYSTERY OF RECONCILIATION** (Confessions) at location TBD
- OPENING OF PILGRIMAGE**
- 9:30 a.m. **THIRD HOUR** at Shrine Altar
- 10 a.m. Procession with the icon of Our Lady of Perpetual Help to the Shrine Altar and **DIVINE LITURGY**
- Welcome: Sister Susan Sisko, OSBM
- 1- 5 p.m. **MYSTERY OF RECONCILIATION** (Confessions) at location TBD
- 1 p.m. **MOLEBEN** to Theotokos at Shrine Altar
- 2 p.m. **CHILDREN’S PILGRIMAGE** at Children’s Tent
- ORIENTATION for TEENS** at Prayer Garden
- MYSTERY OF ANOINTING** at Shrine Altar
- YOUNG ADULT PILGRIMAGE** at Lourdes Tent
- 3 p.m. **TEEN PILGRIMAGE** at Prayer Garden

- 4 p.m. **VESPERS** with **DIVINE LITURGY** at Shrine Altar
- 7:30 p.m. Procession to Cemetery for Parastas
- Teen Social after Parastas
- Sunday, August 31
- 7:30 a.m. **MATINS** at Shrine Altar
- 8 a.m. – noon **MYSTERY OF RECONCILIATION** (Confessions) at location TBD
- 9 a.m. **DIVINE LITURGY** – Slavonic Shrine Altar
- 11 a.m. **DIVINE LITURGY** - Vocations Shrine Altar
- Noon – 5 p.m. **MYSTERY OF RECONCILIATION** (Confessions) at location TBD
- 1 p.m. **CHILDREN’S PROCESSION** with Special Blessing for Youth & Young Adults – from Lourdes Grotto to the Shrine Altar
- 2 p.m. **ENRICHMENT SESSION** at Trinity Center
- BEREAVEMENT SESSION** at Mausoleum

- CHILDREN’S PILGRIMAGE** at Children’s Tent
- TEEN PILGRIMAGE** at Prayer Garden
- YOUNG ADULT PILGRIMAGE** at Lourdes Tent
- 2 p.m. **MYSTERY OF ANOINTING** at Shrine Altar
- 3:45 p.m. Procession to Shrine Altar
- 4 p.m. **DIVINE LITURGY** at Shrine Altar Words of Gratitude: Sister Susan Sisko, O.S.B.M.
- 7:30 p.m. **CANDLELIGHT PROCESSION** (Beginning and ending at the Shrine Altar)
- CLOSING OF THE PILGRIMAGE**
- Following the Candlelight Procession:
- TEEN SOCIAL** Prayer Garden Area
- YOUNG ADULT GATHERING** at Lourdes Tent
- Monday, September 1
- 9:30 a.m. **DIVINE LITURGY** at Shrine Altar



■ ■ ■ BYZANTINE CATHOLIC ASSEMBLY IN WHITING, IND. ■ ■ ■

“Come let us worship and bow before Christ”

ST. MARY BYZANTINE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN WHITING, IND. HOSTS THIRD BYZANTINE ASSEMBLY

*Scenes from the Byzantine Assembly, held July 16 to 20 in the Eparchy of Parma at St. Mary Byzantine Catholic Church in Whiting, Ind.
Captions written by Laura Ieraci, whose husband is Father Andrew Summerson, pastor at St. Mary.*



The afternoon at the Byzantine Catholic Assembly, hosted at St. Mary Byzantine Catholic Church, Whiting, Indiana, (July 17) continued with thought-provoking and community-minded presentations by Trinidad Raj Molina on community-building and Deacon Jeff Meirzejewski on the resurgence of the hours in parishes. Lively exchanges followed once again.



The afternoon of (July 19) at the Byzantine Catholic Assembly, hosted at St. Mary Byzantine Catholic Church, Whiting, Indiana, included a message to participants from Pope Leo XIV, an interview with Metropolitan Archbishop William C. Skurla, and a presentation by Archbishop Michael Jalakh of the Vatican's Dicastery for the Eastern Catholic Churches on the theme, "Preserving Our Identity, Rebuilding Our Future: Living Our mission in Today's Byzantine Church in the U.S.A."



(July 18) of the Byzantine Catholic Assembly, hosted at St. Mary Byzantine Catholic Church, ended with a live recording of the podcast "What God Is Not," with Fr. Michael O'Loughlin and Mother Natalia, followed by compline at the outdoor Shrine of the Protection of the Mother of God. We even had a moment of prayer at our prayer garden dedicated to Mother of God Searcher of the Lost. The evening continued with a young adults gathering in our on-site Byzantine Cafe. More from the cafe tomorrow!



We called it "Dining Al Fresco"! Participants at the North American Byzantine Catholic Assembly, hosted at St. Mary Byzantine Catholic Church, Whiting, Ind. dined outdoors for the most part, enjoying a great Indiana summer night and Chicagoland fare. The City of Whiting closed its main street to accommodate the influx of our Byzantine Catholic guests. Dinner was followed by compline at St. Mary's outdoor shrine and a social for young adults in the Byzantine Cafe.

GCU Byzantine Family Day at Kennywood

TEXT MESSAGES

Lost in translation

by David Mayernik Jr.
Editor



Notes to self on this year's GCU Byzantine Catholic Day at Kennywood:

■ It's difficult enough to not know where you're going with no idea of how to get there. But maybe it's more aggravating to know where you're going and be totally flummoxed regarding the route to your destination. This was my experience on Thursday, July 24 in the back seat of my parents' car driving to SS. Peter and Paul in Duquesne, Pa. from Scott Township for the Order of the Sixth Hour and luncheon, a prelude to the day at Kennywood.

Don't tell my parents I'm speaking for them, but all three of us are "directionally challenged" and we've never been to the parish, so we had a difficult time following the dulcet tones of the GPS voice emanating from the screen on the car's dashboard telling us to "make a right turn" here and a "quick left turn" there. I'm sure it's a common problem with drivers navigating around many neighborhoods in Pittsburgh.

But we made it for a nice morning of faith and fellowship. The service was celebrated by Metropolitan Archbishop William C. Skurla; Bishop Robert Pipta of the Eparchy of Parma; Very Rev. Andrew Deskevich, Protosyncellus and rector of St. John the Baptist Cathedral in Munhall, Pa.; and Father Tyler Wisniewski, pastor of St. John Chrysostom and St. John the Baptist, both in Pittsburgh, Pa.

■ This year at Kennywood, I discovered two words I'm entirely not fond of: "Splash Zone."

I was never one for being splashed with water any place other than in the shower, but the children watching the Nerveless Nocks Water Jetpack Flying Water Circus seemed to enjoy the experience.

The stunt show took place in a giant pool containing 50,000 gallons of water with one performer driving a jet ski and



Photos by David Mayernik Jr.

the other – get this – attached to the jet ski by a hose leading to a jetpack contraption securing his feet. The force of the water traveling through the hose lifted him up to 60 feet in the air. Actually, he was pretty impressive, performing

somersaults while in mid-air, while the water rushing out the back of his footgear soaked the nearby young onlookers, who screamed mostly with delight. See photo (above) for a visual certainly better than any words I can use to describe the

performance. And, as the Kennywood hosts said: "Don't try this at home." ■ Instead of water acrobatics, I'll stick with my yearly consumption of a vanilla and chocolate twist ice cream cone for an adrenaline rush at Kennywood. ■

A journey to the altar of Christ fulfilled

FATHER LUKE IYENGAR ORDAINED TO PRIESTHOOD AT ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST CATHEDRAL IN MUNHALL, PA.

By Samuel Tima
St. John the Baptist Cathedral
Munhall, Pa.

On Sunday, July 6, Deacon Luke Iyengar, of Holy Ghost Parish in McKees Rocks, Pa., was ordained to the presbyterate for the Archeparchy of Pittsburgh by Metropolitan Archbishop William C. Skurla at St. John the Baptist Cathedral in Munhall, Pa.

Concelebrating clergy as well as many family members and friends from across the country gathered to celebrate and show support.

At the conclusion of the liturgy, Father Luke expressed words of gratitude to God and all those who supported him in his vocation.

He especially expressed his loving gratitude to his mother, Maria Iyengar, for all her support throughout his life.

The following day, on Monday, July 7, he celebrated his first Divine Liturgy of Thanksgiving at Holy Ghost Parish in McKees Rocks, where he has been a life-long parishioner.

Family, friends, and fellow parishioners were present. At the conclusion of the liturgy, he bestowed his first priestly blessing upon all those in attendance.

Father Luke served his home parish of Holy Ghost as an altar server from his youth until adulthood. He also assisted as cantor, ECF teacher, and temporary ECF coordinator.

He entered SS. Cyril and Methodius Byzantine Seminary in 2019 and completed his Masters of Divinity in 2024.

He also holds a Master of Arts in Theology degree from Franciscan University. He has taught courses at both the college and high school level.

Upon completion of seminary, he returned to his roots at Holy Ghost to serve as Subdeacon and Deacon until his ordination to the priesthood.

At the end of each Divine Liturgy, the church community sent their prayers and well wishes to the newly ordained Father Luke, and for his future ministry by singing the traditional Byzantine hymn "God Grant You Many Years!"



Photos by Nick Havrilla Sr.

ST. MICHAEL IN HERMITAGE, PA.

The road to 120 years

By Bill Dzuricko
St. Michael, Hermitage, Pa.

St. Michael Byzantine Catholic Church in Hermitage, Pa. recently began their year of celebration for their 120th anniversary. Very Rev. Father Kevin Marks celebrated the Divine Liturgies at 4 p.m. on Saturday and 9 a.m. on Sunday and inspired everyone with his homily.

After each of the Liturgies, parishioners were treated to pepperoni, cheese, crackers, fruit, and cake.

The parish will host a special



Divine Liturgy at 2 p.m. on Sunday, Nov. 9 near the Feast Day of St. Michael.

Following the Liturgy, a banquet will be held at 6 p.m.

Congratulations, Father Kevin and the parishioners of St. Michael in Hermitage! ■



Celebrating Flag Day

By Bill Dzuricko
St. Michael, Hermitage, Pa.

On Sunday, June 22 St. Michael Byzantine Catholic Church in Hermitage, Pa. held their annual Flag Day Ceremony after the 9 a.m. Divine Liturgy.

Very Rev. Father Kevin Marks blessed the new flags, which were donated by the GCU at the end of the Liturgy.

At the Social Center flagpole, Parish Coordinator Bill Dzuricko led the ceremony which began with a welcome and a moment of silence for all of the deceased parishioners and veterans over the past year.

The program then included some Flag trivia questions which were answered by the attendees.

Parish Air Force Veteran Norbert Vasil, with help from

Karl and Calix Gibbons, lowered and removed the old flags and replaced and raised the new flags.

After the Pledge of Allegiance and the singing of the National Anthem, a patriotic poem was read.

Finally, after the singing of several patriotic songs, the program concluded with the singing of "God Bless America."

Special "thank you" to Mike and Alyssa Vasil for working with the Hermitage Volunteer Fire Department to keep our Social Center flagpole in excellent working order and for taking pictures of the event. ‘

Finally, thank you to all of the parishioners who attended our annual Flag Day Ceremony, and especially the Gibbons family for their enthusiastic singing! ■





ST. MARY CHURCH OF THE DORMITION IN WINDBER, PA.

Remembering those who served

By Bill Koshute
St. Mary Church of the Dormition,
Windber, Pa.

On this year's Flag Day, June 14, as part of the opening of a year-long celebration marking the 125th anniversary of St. Mary Church of the Dormition in Windber, Pa., Father Ivan Rusyn, Windber Veterans, along with the Windber VFW Post 4795 Ritual Team and many members of the community, gathered at St. Mary's cemetery in a solemn ceremony to honor all those who served in all branches of the military through wars and peace-keeping in all of Windber's cemeteries.

In the backdrop of intermittent light rain, members of the community drove through the cemetery gates with guidance from Doug Ledney, whose Uncle Paul Ledney, an aerial gunner, gave his life for his country when his plane was shot down.

Next they would meet Father Ivan, cantor Mariana Rusyn and parishioner and organizer Mark Antalosky, whose uncle, John Antalosky, made the ultimate sacrifice in World War II when his ship torpedoed).

Mark opened the ceremony with the prayer "This is the Day the Lord H Made, Let Us Rejoice and Be Glad " and the quote from George H. W. Bush: "Whether we observe the occasion through public ceremony or private prayer, this day leaves few hearts unmoved, each of the patriots that we remember today was first a beloved son or daughter, a sibling or a spouse, friend or neighbor."

Father Ivan and Mark reflected on the freedoms we enjoy because of sacrifices of those who went before us.

Both welcomed those in attendance, then turned the attention to the cemetery flag pole, crafted and produced by the late veteran and parishioner Alfred Kormanik.

Called to attention by Commander James Koshute, whose cousin, John Knapp Jr., made the ultimate sacrifice as his unit advanced through Germany; members of VFW Post 4795 solemnly lowered the currently flying older flag, as prayers for the fallen soldier

were given by VFW chaplain Thomas Pomroy.

Following the careful folding of this flag, it was presented to Father Ivan on behalf of the President of the United States and Windber VFW Post 4795.

From this cemetery overlooking all of Windber, the new flag was raised, and in full Salute the Honor Guard gave a moving 21 Gun Salute followed by double echo taps for all veterans interned in all of Windber's cemeteries.

After which, the gathering recited the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag, Mark read the following quote, "Today is Flag Day, the Flag represents: Freedom, Dignity, and the True meaning of being an American. As we look towards the Flag, Our Flag does not fly because the wind moves it, it flies with the last breath of each soldier who died protecting it —Author Unknown."

Father Ivan then passed the folded flag to his son and Boy Scout Antoni Rusyn, and spoke of the great sacrifices of those killed in all wars and began the Panachida Memorial Service prayer for them, all interned veterans in all cemeteries, with cantor Mariana.

Following the Panachida, Mark closed the service with these words: "All veterans who are laid to rest, we love you, with the assurance from God, they provided us with Life, Liberty, the Pursuit of Happiness and Religious Liberties. They sacrificed their own life to give us life, they fought for Freedom to give us Liberty, they died and gave us the pursuit of happiness. They loved God, and gave us religious freedom. Without these patriots, this could have been a different looking country. Let us all be Blessed, Gracious and Thankful for their sacrifices. We are fortunate to have the Windber VFW Post 4795 joining us today to honor, our fathers, brothers, sisters, friends and neighbors which they provided the 21 Gun Salute and Taps with the highest Honors. These are the living patriots comprised of the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, Space Force, Coast Guard, Armed Forces Reserve and National Guard that continue to provide us with Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness. The past and present Veterans are truly a Band of Brothers! Thank You for your service and patriotism!"

As the ceremony closed, many convened at St. Mary's church hall for fellowship and reflection. ■



Veterans, Parishioners and Windber community members gather in prayer at Veterans Memorial Service.



Windber VFW Post 4795 carries out 21 Gun Salute followed by double echo Taps.



Quartermaster Richard Opett carries old U.S. Flag to Father Ivan Rusyn.



Quartermaster Richard Opett presents U.S. Flag to Father Ivan Rusyn.



HOLY TRINITY IN SYKESVILLE, PA.

Fields of dreams

By Natalia Tapsak
Holy Trinity, Sykesville, Pa.

On the Feast of St. George the Wonderworker (April 23), Father Nathaniel Tapsak blessed fields and livestock for the Kennis family, parishioners of Holy Trinity in Sykesville, Pa. and farmers for five generations. ■



Youth Trip on Spring Work Day

By Natalia Tapsak
Holy Trinity, Sykesville, Pa.

Parishioners from Holy Trinity in Sykesville, Pa. traveled to Burton, Ohio on May 31 to assist nuns at Christ the Bridegroom with their annual Spring Work Day.

Parishioners included the Morgan family (father Corey and children Sophia, John, Peter, Theodore, and Clement),

the Chrusch family (father Ryan and children Joseph, Nicholas, Gregory, and Matthew), and Pani Natalia Tapsak and daughter Irena.

We helped the nuns with plumbing, installing blinds and light fixtures, weeding and landscaping, and cleaning the monastery.

Afterwards, we stayed for Vespers and dinner. ■



Patronal Feast on Pentecost

By Natalia Tapsak
Holy Trinity, Sykesville, Pa.

Holy Trinity in Sykesville, Pa. celebrated its Patronal Feast on Pentecost with a procession and dinner after Sunday's liturgy. Parishioners reflected on the past 118 years since the Church was founded.

Additionally, a few special

parishioners were honored: second-graders Matthew Kosko and Grayden Kennis, who celebrated the Mystery of Confession for the first time; high school graduates Carter Vos and James Sweka; and cantor Victor Kosko, who is celebrating 50 years of service cantoring at Holy Trinity. ■



Parishioners Grayden Kennis and Matthew Kosko participated in their first Solemn Communion and First Confession. We as a Parish are very proud of Grayden and Matthew. May God grant them many blessed years. Both boys were presented with an icon of Saint Paul by their teacher. A short story of Saint Paul was told and how both boys can model their life after Saint Paul. The first picture is Grayden and Matthew with their second grade teacher Matthew Kosko, father of Mathew Kosko. The second picture is Grayden and Matthew with Father Nathaniel Tapsak, their father Matthew, and Deacon Luke Crawford.



Carter Vos, Class of 2025 with Father Nathaniel Tapsak; and James Sweka, Class of 2025, with father Gabriel "Butch" Sweka, Holy Trinity's caretaker for over 10 years;

RIGHT: Victor Kosko, Cantor of Holy Trinity Parish in Sykesville, Pa, celebrated 50 years as cantor this year. He was recognized at our Parish Pentecost dinner. We are grateful for his contributions to our Parish over the past 50 years. May God grant him many blessed years. Victor is holding a photo collage signed by parishioners with Father Nathaniel Tapsak.



SS. PETER AND PAUL IN BRADDOCK PA.

Feast Day Picnic

by Arleen Jama
SS. Peter and Paul, Braddock, Pa.

Despite the sweltering heat in our church basement, spirits were high as parishioners of SS. Peter and Paul in Braddock, Pa. gathered for our annual Feast Day picnic.

The delicious spread featured homemade sauerkraut, pasta salad, and cheregie generously prepared and shared by our talented parish

family.

We're truly grateful to the GCU for their continued support, which helps bring our parish together for special moments like this.

Entertainment came in many forms, including our own homemade version of pickleball — “jazzminton” —where Father Vitalii Stashkevych gave it his best shot, though let's just say it's still a work in progress. ■



SS. PETER AND PAUL IN DUQUESNE, PA.

Celebrating our patron saints

Thank you to the SS. Peter and Paul Parish Club in Duquesne, Pa. for providing a beautiful afternoon of food and fellowship with the assistance of the GCU. Father Christian Kappes is pastor. ■



Honoring our fathers

SS. Peter and Paul in Duquesne, Pa. honored our fathers along with all the important men in our lives. ■



CHURCH OF THE RESURRECTION IN MONROEVILLE, PA.

Making beautiful music

Church of the Resurrection in Monreville, Pa. hosted its second annual flute concert and ice cream social.

It was a wonderful event with 40 parishioners in attendance. ■





ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST IN SCOTTTDALE, PA.

Church picnic

The annual church picnic was held at St. John the Baptist in Scottsdale, Pa. Father Oleh Seremchuk presented the annual Service Award to

John and Kathy Onusko and Mike and Cindy Marcej for all their dedication to the church. Food was provided by the church and parish members. ■



Grill masters Alan Hribal, Steve Matsey, and Mike Marcej.



Enjoying the Bouncy House are Mark Seremchuk, Harrison Myers, and Carson Martin.



ST. GREGORY IN UPPER ST. CLAIR, PA.

Welcome, Father Joshua!

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

The Fourth Sunday after Pentecost, July 6, was celebrated in a special way at St. Gregory in Upper St. Clair, Pa. We were overjoyed to witness the newly ordained Father Joshua A. Johnson at the Holy Table. During his formation and studies, Father Joshua and his lovely family had St. Gregory as their second spiritual home. As it is a custom, at the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy, Father Joshua bestowed his priestly blessing to the faithful. ■



Blessing of Vehicles

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

On Saturday and Sunday, July 19 and 20, we had the annual blessing of vehicles in our parish family. This blessing takes place in our parish every year in commemoration of the prophet Elijah who was taken into heaven on a fiery chariot. Our modern vehicles have become “our chariots in the modern world.” We pray that these vehicles will always be used for the benefit of all and to keep from danger those who use and are around them. ■





ST. GREGORY IN UPPER ST. CLAIR, PA.

Vacation Church School 2025

By Father Valerian Michlik, St. Gregory, Upper St. Clair, Pa. Edited for space.

Day 1: On Monday morning, June 16th, all was ready for Vacation Church School 2025 at St. Gregory's Byzantine Catholic Church in Upper St. Clair, Pa.

As part of the program, each day the children are presented with the life of the Saint of the Day. Today it was Saint Tikhon, Bishop of Amathus in Cyprus.

This year we are following the

program "Ark of Salvation" that focuses on the Feasts of the Theotokos.

Today we focused on Nativity of our Lady and Entrance into the Temple and as part of the curriculum the children enjoyed hymns and original songs, crafts, and classroom lessons all related to these feast days of our Holy Church. ■



Day 2: The second day of Vacation Church School was dedicated to the Annunciation of the Most Holy Theotokos. This is one of the earliest Christian feasts and was already being celebrated in the Fourth Century. The Greek and Slavonic names for the Feast may be translated as "good tidings." This, of course, refers to the Incarnation of the Son of God and the salvation He brings.

The Saint of the Day was

St. Emily de Vialar who is commemorated on this day in the Christian West. A French nun who founded the missionary congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph of the Apparition, St. Emily inaugurated a new form of religious life devoted to the service of all the poorest of the poor — caring for them in their every sort of misery — as well as attending to the education of very young girls. ■



Day 3: The third day of our Vacation Church School was dedicated to the Dormition of the Most Holy Theotokos.

Following the Prayer of the Third Hour we learned about the venerable Leontius of the Kyiv Caves Monastery. The "Saint of the Day," venerable Leontius, was gifted with a fine voice, and when he learned to read, he fulfilled the obedience of canonarch — leader of church singing at this famous monastery.

Throughout the day we learned more about the Dormition of

the Theotokos which celebrates the falling asleep, resurrection and glorification of Mary, the mother of Jesus. This major feast day is often called the "Summer Pascha," because the Mother of God herself "passed over" from this earthly pilgrimage into life eternal.

Besides class time, music, crafts, and games, today we also planted flowers in honor of our Lady. Flowers play a central role for this feast day and are blessed on this day in many of our churches. ■



Day 4: We were ready for our field trip to Fired Up Art Studio. Fired Up is Pittsburgh's leading studio where you can paint your own pottery.

Our day concluded with great food and fellowship at Grande Restaurant across the street from the studio.

Vacation Church School is a

blessing for our St. Gregory's parish family.

A sincere thanks to our ECF parents and children for participating in this program, and a huge thank you to our dedicated teachers and volunteers for making this all possible! May our Lord grant you all many happy and blessed years! ■





ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST IN UNIONTOWN, PA.

Parish Feast Day

By Bonnie Balas and Julia Pillar
St. John the Baptist, Uniontown, Pa.

A Divine Liturgy was celebrated on June 24 to commemorate the feast of St. John the Baptist. Father Stephen Wahal and Father Aaron Sandbothe (St. George Maronite Church) concelebrated the liturgy with Father Kyprian Wojciechowski. The annual parish Feast Day dinner was held in the social hall on Saturday, June 28 after

the Divine Liturgy. An array of mouth-watering covered dish items was followed by an ice cream sundae bar served by seminarian Adam Marquart. St. John Social Ministry Committee provided the chicken, holubki, and beverages. In keeping with the spirit of St. John the Baptist, small bottles of honey and “bee” decorated medovniki accented each place setting for those attending. ■



St. Elias (Elijah) Celebration

By Bonnie Balas and Julia Pillar
St. John the Baptist, Uniontown, Pa.

The weekend of July 19 to 20 Divine Liturgies commemorated St. Elias (Elijah). Father Kyprian Wojciechowski gave a stirring homily depicting key aspects of St. Elias’s (Elijah’s) life. Vehicles were blessed in the

church parking lot following the Saturday Divine Liturgy. On Sunday, Father Kyprian blessed vehicles prior to the Divine Liturgy due to his schedule which requires his serving Holy Protection of Mary in Morgantown, W. Va. ■



July birthday recognition

By Bonnie Balas and Julia Pillar
St. John the Baptist, Uniontown, Pa.

On Saturday, July 19 following the Divine Liturgy, the July birthday social was held. A light meal included pizza and wings, favorites of Father Kyprian

Wojciechowski. Among those celebrating birthdays in July was Father Kyprian, who celebrated his 32nd birthday on July 24. God grant him many years! ■



ST. ELIAS IN MUNHALL, PA.

Celebrating Patronal Feast

By Mary Caryl Planiczki
St. Elias, Munhall, Pa.

St. Elias in Munhall, Pa. celebrated liturgy for their patronal feast on Saturday, July 19 and Sunday, July 20. In commemoration of St. Elias,

who was taken up to heaven in a fiery chariot, all types of vehicles were blessed after each liturgy, including scooters and tricycles. May God keep safe all who use these vehicles. ■



ST. MICHAEL IN CAMPBELL, OHIO

“True North” Vacation Bible School 2025

Day 1:
Bible Point: When we wonder, we can trust Jesus.
Bible Verse: “Anyone who listens to my teaching and follows it is wise.” (Matthew 7:24)
Bible Story: John prepares the way and baptizes Jesus. (Matthew 3: 11:1-6) ■



Day 2:
Bible Point: When we feel alone, we can trust Jesus.
Bible Verse: “Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest.” (Matthew 11:28)
Bible Story: Jesus teaches about God’s love for us. (Matthew 6:25-33; 18:12-14) ■



Day 3:
Bible Point: When we feel powerless, we can trust Jesus.
Bible Verse: “Don’t be afraid, he said. Take courage. I am here.” (Matthew 14:27)
Bible Story: A Roman officer trusts Jesus.” (Matthew 8:5-13) ■



Day 4:
Bible Point: When we need hope, we can trust Jesus.
Bible Verse: “And his name will be the hope of all the world.” (Matthew 12:21)
Bible Story: Jeaus dies and comes back to life. (Matthew 26:47-28:8) ■





THOUGHTS FOR OUR DAY

By Archpriest David M. Petras



THE ORDER OF DEACON




The diaconate is the first of the cheirotonia (major orders), administered within the sanctuary in the Divine Liturgy. The ordination takes place after the Anaphora but before Communion, to signify that the deacon is not permitted to preside at the Eucharistic Prayer. The newly-ordained deacon receives Communion before the other deacons, and his first public action is the Litany of Thanksgiving. It should be noted that a man who is ordained priest or deacon should not, by tradition, perform any public actions until after they have received Communion, which is the seal of the ordination.

The candidate is first led to the altar, which he kisses on the four corners three times. This is called the "introduction to the altar," for the major orders are those that have service at the holy table. This is an indication of the sanctification of these orders, for while the deacon, presbyter and bishop had community responsibilities, their service at the altar was considered their most important function. After the introduction to the altar, the candidate kneels at southern corner of the altar on one knee, for he receives only one gift of the ministry. This custom was already observed by Pseudo-Dionysius (fifth century). The deacon says, "Give the blessing," but does not bless; he says, "Let us pray," but does not pray; he says, "Wisdom, be attentive," but does not perfect.

The bishop then imposes hands

for ordination. The ordination actually occurs through the Holy Spirit, as the bishop notes in the second prayer for the deacon, "For it is not by the laying on of my hands, but by the visitation of your abundant mercy, that your grace is given to those worthy before you." The ordination begins with the well-known formula "Divine grace, which always heals illnesses


The first technical use of the term is in Philippians 1:1: "Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus, to all the holy ones at Philippi, with their bishops and deacons in Christ Jesus."

and supplies what is lacking..." The prayer, "Divine grace...", is found in all the Eastern rites. It seems to date from the fourth century, and is based on a work of Didymus the Blind (313-398) or on a common source. Defending the divinity of the Spirit, Didymus wrote: "Indeed, the Lord is said to be God the Father, truly Word... and Spirit, the holy existing Spirit of God, from whom we are sanctified and strengthened, for his name is divine....He is divine grace itself, which supplies what is lacking and cures what is ill"(On

the Trinity II, 1). There is some discussion among theologians as to whether it is the sacramental formula or only the proclamation of ordination. A scroll was given by the chancellor to the bishop, who then opened it and read the text. The complete ordination then followed with the laying on of hands during two prayers.

Today, many parishes have men serving as deacons. Fifty years ago, there were almost no deacons, except for seminarians who were to be ordained priests after a short diaconate. The order was revived after the Second Vatican Council. The Roman Catholic Church believed that restoring the order of deacon would give married men a way to serve in the Liturgy and at the altar. However, it is more than that. The order of deacon is a sacramental mystery that embodies the meaning of service to the community and is an essential part of the ministry of the Church. In our Church, the diaconate was also restored after the Council. When it was restored, it was a sacramental mystery of order for married men. Since then, we have also restored the married priesthood, but the diaconate has remained, because it has such an important role for spiritual service in the people of God.

Traditionally, the office of deacon was established by the ordination of St. Stephen, who is called therefore the "protodeacon (the first deacon)." This was not the establishment of the diaconate in the modern sense, because St. Stephen was ordained for a particular function: to serve the Greek-speaking community. Stephen is never called a "deacon," but he is chosen for diakonia

(Greek, "service"), a general term to cover all service to the community, and not a technical name for an "order." The passage from Acts is important, though, because it may have influenced the early diaconate, and made charitable works a part of its role. Some find the origin of the diaconate in the words of Christ, "The Son of Man came not to be served, but to serve (Mark 10:45). Christ was speaking of all service to the Church, and all Christian faithful, who conform to the image of Christ, can render service, but it is also important, because it made the diaconate the order most conformable to the image of Christ. Even today, the Litany of Peace prays for the "diaconate in Christ."

The first technical use of the term is in Philippians 1:1: "Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus, to all the holy ones at Philippi, with their bishops and deacons in Christ Jesus."

The office is further developed in the pastoral epistles. I Timothy 3:8-13 describes the characteristics required of a deacon: "Deacons must be dignified, not deceitful, not addicted to drink, not greedy for sordid gain, holding fast to the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience Deacons may be married only once and must manage their children and their households well. Thus those who serve well as deacons gain good standing and much confidence in their faith in Christ Jesus." As a people of faith, we should honor those men who choose to serve the community as deacons. We owe a great debt to them for their service. ■

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>



St. John The Baptist Byzantine Catholic Church 19th Annual Classic Car Show



Registration: 12 pm to 2 pm
With a registration fee of \$12
Car Show 12 pm to 4 pm
Rain or Shine

The First 150 cars will receive dash
plaques along with Over 25 trophies
awarded.

Music Provided By DJ Arnie Amber

50/50 Drawing
Byzantine Auction

GREAT FOOD

Date: September 28, 2025
Location: 185 East Main Street
Uniontown PA 15401



Classes Include

1900-1930
1931-1950
1951-1960
1961-1965
1966-1970
1971-1976
1977-1987
1988-2009
Street rod/Modified
Trucks
1959-older
1960-2009

No Judging For 2010 and Newer

Golf cart will be on site for transportation

Proceeds will benefit St. John the
Baptist Church Maintenance Fund

AROUND THE ARCHEPARCHY



ST. GREGORY FLEA MARKET — 8 a.m.-noon. Saturday, Aug. 2 St. Gregory, 2005 Mohawk Road, Upper St. Clair (Brookside Farms), Pa. Kitchen items, sports equipment, jewelry, purses, luggage, household, home décor, tools, holiday items, puzzles and games, and baby items. Leftover sale 11 a.m.-1 p.m. Sunday, Aug. 3. For information, call 412-835-7800. See ad below.

ST. JOHN PARISH DAY OF PRAYER — 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Saturday, Aug. 9, St. John the Baptist, 185 E. Main St., Uniontown, Pa. Divine Liturgy followed by presentations by Father Kyprian Wojechowski, Father Thomas Moore Sikora, OSB, and Seminarian Adam. Refreshments, a meal, opportunity for confession, and fellowship. Everyone welcome to attend. Sign the sheets located in back of church and the altar server sacristy so we know how many to prepare for. Invite your relatives and friends. The mission will a time of refreshing and revitalizing our spiritual life.

Events at St. Michael, 463 Robinson Road, Campbell, Ohio:

3-TIER AUCTION – Sunday, Sept. 7. Doors open at noon. Raffle drawing at 2 p.m. Admission: \$10 includes lunch and 25 Tier-1 tickets. Three levels of over 200 prizes to win. For more information, contact parish office at 330-755-4831.

REVERSE RAFFLE – Saturday, Oct. 4. Numbers 1 to 200 will be drawn. Grand prize: \$2,500. Other side games will be played. Ticket numbers are \$100 each. Appetizers at 5 p.m., dinner at 6 p.m. Drawing begins at 7 p.m. To purchase a ticket, contact parish office at 330-755-4831.

SAVE THE DATE: NIGHT AT THE RACES — Saturday, Sept.13, St. John the Baptist Church at St. John Chrysostom Hall, (Greenfield, Pa.). Buy a horse; bet on a horse; enjoy delicious food! 50/50 Raffle and Auction Baskets, too. \$20 ticket includes admission and food. BYOB. For tickets, call Beverly Rebovich 412-315-1514. Proceeds benefit St. John the Baptist Church, South Side, Pittsburgh, Pa.

St. Gregory Byzantine Catholic Church

Summer Flea Market

Saturday, August 2, 2025

8 AM - 12 NOON

“Leftover” Sale

Sunday, August 3

11 AM - 1 PM

St. Gregory's annual
summer Flea Market
welcomes all to browse the
aisles filled with useful
and decorative items.

- Kitchen items
- Sports equipment
- Jewelry
- Purses
- Luggage
- Small furniture
- Household items
- Home decor
- Tools
- Holiday items
- Puzzles, Games & Toys
- Baby items
- and other treasures.



In addition to Cash, Credit/Debit Cards; Apple, Google
& Samsung Pay will be accepted.

St. Gregory Church Hall
2005 Mohawk Road
Upper St. Clair, PA 15241
stgregorymc.org

Benefits: Women of Faith Parish Programs

DATES TO REMEMBER



AUG. 6
Feast of the Transfiguration of Our Lord

AUG. 10
125th anniversary of SS. Peter and Paul in Patton, Pa.

AUG. 14
Archbishop William celebrates Liturgy at the Shrine of Our Lady of Lebanon,
North Jackson, Ohio

AUG. 15
Feast of the Dormition of the Theotokos

AUG. 17
30th anniversary of St. Andrew in Gibsonia, Pa.

AUG. 24
125th anniversary of St. Mary in Windber, Pa.

AUG. 26
Divine Liturgy for the opening of the year at SS. Cyril and Methodius Seminary
in Pittsburgh, Pa.

AUG. 29 to SEPT. 1
91st annual Pilgrimage in honor of Our Lady of Perpetual Help
The Sisters of St. Basil the Great
Mount St. Macrina, Uniontown, Pa.

See more upcoming events at www.archpitt.org

WORLD

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