



# WAY



# ШЛЯХ

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ENGLISH VERSION

## Philadelphia marked Patriarch Slipyj's 120<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

On February 25-26, 2012, Philadelphia marked Patriarch Slipyj's 120<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. On Saturday, February 25, a scholarly conference on the life and works of Servant of God Josyf Slipyj was held at La Salle University Chapel (20<sup>th</sup> and Olney Ave.) in **English**.

On Sunday, February 26, at 9.00 a.m. a Pontifical Divine Liturgy for +Patriarch Josyf Slipyj was celebrated at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Philadelphia (833 N. Franklin St.). Following the Divine Liturgy, memoirs of the Patriarch were shared in **Ukrainian** at the Cathedral Hall.

Read an article in English from the event held on Saturday, February 25<sup>th</sup> in the English version of "The Way." Read an article in Ukrainian from the event held on Sunday, February 26<sup>th</sup> in the Ukrainian version of "The Way."



*(Photo: Mosaic of +Patriarch Josyf Slipyj at the Ukrainian Catholic Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, Philadelphia, PA.)*



**Watch videos  
from the Liturgy  
for Patriarch Josyf Slipyj  
on our blog at  
[www.thewayukrainian.blogspot.com](http://www.thewayukrainian.blogspot.com)**

Photo (l to r): Rev. Dr. Andrew Onuferko, V. Rev. Dr. Ivan Dacko, Metropolitan-Archbishop Stefan Soroka, Rev. Ivan Demkiv, V. Rev. Marian Procyk.

*(Photos: T. Siwak)*

# Philadelphia marked Patriarch Slipyj's 120<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

Photos from Sunday, February 26, 2012  
(Photos by: Sr. Lydia Anna Sawka, OSBM)



Very Rev. Dr. Ivan Dacko, Homilist, at the Cathedral.



Metropolitan-Archbishop Stefan Soroka at the Presentation at the Cathedral Hall.



Audience at the Cathedral Hall.



Speakers of the Presentation at the Cathedral Hall.

## 120th anniversary of the Confessor of Faith Cardinal Josyf Slipyj (1892-1984) is commemorated at La Salle University.



Year 2012 marks 120th anniversary of the Confessor of Faith Cardinal Josyf Slipyj (1892-1984). Under the initiative of St. Sophia Religious Association of Ukrainian Catholics in the USA, in cooperation with La Salle University, the Shevchenko Scientific Society, Ukrainian Catholic Education Foundation in Chicago, and the Ukrainian Catholic Archeparchy of Philadelphia, a two-day conference commemorating the Confessor of Faith Patriarch Josyf Cardinal Slipyj was held in Philadelphia on February 25-26, 2012.

On Saturday, February 25, La Salle University hosted the scholarly international part

of the conference was dedicated to the life and work of Patriarch Slipyj. The two-session event was chaired by Dr. Leonid Rudnytzky, President of St. Sophia Association, who conveyed congratulations from the church and state dignitaries. Among them: His Beatitude Sviatoslav Shevchuk, Major Archbishop of the Ukrainian Catholic Church; His Beatitude Lubomyr Cardinal Husar, Archbishop-Emeritus; Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Ukraine to the United States of America Olexander Motsyk; Dr. Orest Popovych, President of the Shevchenko Scientific Society in the USA. The opening prayer was offered by Br. Joseph Dougherty from the

Department of Graduate Religion, La Salle University.

In his opening remarks, Dr. Rudnytzky outlined the role of Patriarch Slipyj as a Patriarch, pastor, and teacher of his people, the Confessor of Faith. These qualities of this outstanding person were reflected in the papers of the Conference speakers, with Very Rev. Dr. Ivan Dacko, Professor at the Ukrainian Catholic University in Lviv and the Director of its Institute of St. Clement in Rome, as its key speaker. Having served for many years as secretary to Cardinal Josyf, Rev. Dacko chose to analyze *The Spirit of Ecumenism in Josyf Slipyj's works*. The speaker discussed Cardinal Slipyj's views on Byzantinism, comparing the profound

impact of Byzantium of the East and the Slavs to that of Rome on the West. He also focused on the Josyf Slipyj's *The Synod of Petrograd in 1917*, published 1931. In his work Slipyj sets his view on future ecumenical developments and how church policy should be viewed within the sphere of the Church of Kyiv. Continuing his ecumenical work, as Rector of the Lviv Theological Academy, Slipyj organized the unionistic Congress in the premises of the Academy on 23-25 December 1936. Slipyj used the forum of this congress to project an ecumenical program to be followed by the Ukrainian Church, as in the view of Patriarch Slipyj, this

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# 120th anniversary of the Confessor of Faith Cardinal Josyf Slipyj (1892-1984) is commemorated at La Salle University.

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Church between East and West, with influences of both, Byzantine and Roman, cultures, has a special task to work towards the communion of Churches. The resolutions of this Congress were crucial for the Ukrainian Catholic Church as they reminded its faithful to strengthen within their Church the consciousness of belonging to the Christian East, of the mission of all Ukrainian Catholic clergy to ecumenical work, of the need to prepare for this task by a solid formations and studies.

Years later, continued the speaker, during Vatican II Slipyj saw how much the Church had changed and how ecumenism was becoming a top priority for the Pope

and the entire Catholic Church. He fostered the dialogue; he met in the Vatican and elsewhere with Metropolitan Nikodim Rotov of Leningrad and other Russian Orthodox, or Greek Church dignitaries. However, he was very disappointed when some catholic officials, eager to continue the dialogue with the Russian Orthodox Church, considered Eastern Catholics to be a hindrance for ecumenism, and were even prepared to sacrifice them for the sake of good relations with Orthodoxy. Ecumenism is a service to truth and should be based on justice and love. Slipyj would make these points very clear to Pope Paul VI, Cardinal Augustin Bea, Cardinal Johannes Willebrands. Later he

would repeat this to Pope John-Paul II, who always claimed that the dialogue of love should continue, but never at the expense of the Catholic Church. While in the Western world, Slipyj tried to prove and show that Ukrainians – Orthodox and Greek-Catholics – can come to terms, pronouncing the renown words: “We Orthodox, are the same as you Catholics” and leaving his Testament as an ecumenical vision for the Church of the future.

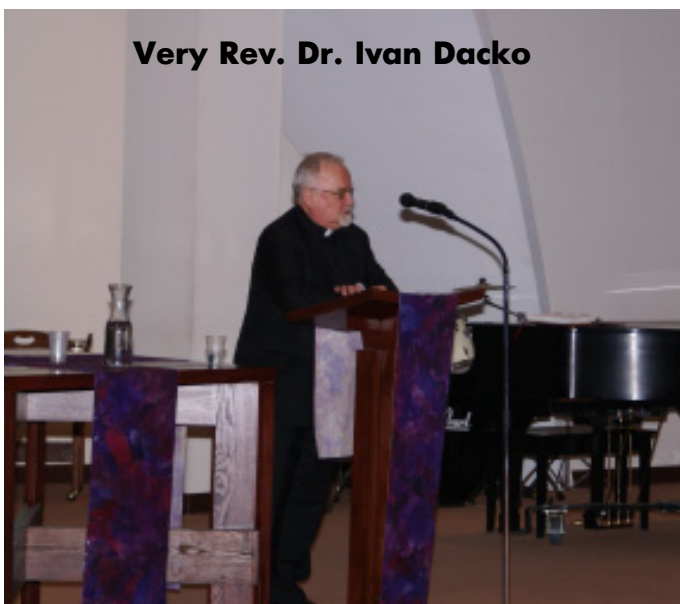
In conclusion, Rev. Ivan Dacko acknowledged Patriarch Josyf Cardinal Slipyj’s unique ecumenical legacy to the universal Church, to his Ukrainian Church and people. He also expressed his hope that Patriarch’s successors can only continue and complete the task leading towards full communion of Churches.

In his paper entitled *Patriarch Slipyj and the Ukrainian Catholic Church in America*, Rev. Dr. Ivan Kaszczak discussed a brief history of the genesis of this American-Ukrainian “diaspora” community and its struggle for identity, soaring with the arrival of the first emigration that began in the early 1870s. This problem was deepened by the

conditions within the Ruthenian Church, which became highly irregular as the result of the absence of a recognized ecclesiastical leader. Finally, in 1907 Bishop Soter Stephen Ortynsky was nominated as bishop for all the Ukrainian Catholics in America. Thus, the speaker enumerated the relationship of the nascent church in the United States and the predecessors of Patriarch Slipyj, stating that the beginnings of these contacts date back to the interwar period. It was at that time thach Father Slipyj invited bishop Bohachevsky to attend the celebrations of the Lviv Seminary in 1934 but Bishop Bohachevsky declined because he placed the financial needs of his eparchy above his personal needs. This may have inspired some tension between the two young Church leaders because Fr. Slipyj would later turn down the position of suffragan to Bishop Bohachevsky.

When released from Siberia through the intervention of President Kennedy and his associates, Patriarch Slipyj took passionately to his

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**Very Rev. Dr. Ivan Dacko**

# 120th anniversary of the Confessor of Faith Cardinal Josyf Slipyj (1892-1984) is commemorated at La Salle University.

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work – his church. The need for he himself to be involved as a unifying factor in the worldwide Ukrainian Catholic Church was expressed by him in 1965: "...all the faithful, the clergy, and the great majority of the bishops, in the actual conditions of disunity within our church and our people, see their salvation in unification under the guidance of the major archbishop." It is for this reason that Patriarch Josyf undertakes three apostolic journeys to the United States. The first of these journeys was in the year 1968. The second was in 1973 and the last in 1976-77 was ostensibly undertaken to attend the funeral of Metropolitan Ambrose Senyshyn, O.S.B.M. on September 16, 1977.

During these visits the Patriarch established parishes and patriarchal organizations whose mission it was to maintain the heritage of the church and its unity. Because Patriarch Josyf had such a cult following based on his charismatic figure his opponents looked upon his oversea journeys as a means of establishing a unique national church. Yet, as Rev. Kaszczak emphasized, for Patriarch Josyf the was a focal point

was that of "unity and a symbol of a suffering church that was not simply surviving but also meeting its evangelical command to preach the Gospel to all nations. He was aware that this gift of faith was to be disseminated throughout the world. He led the church to the end, kept his hands on the plow and never turned back. He was not the one who was to continue – it was Christ's church which would go on to preach, to pray and to live."

The afternoon session opened with Dr. Andrew Sorokowski, Conference Discussant, presenting the audience with comments on Rev. Dacko and Rev. Kaszczak's presentations. Thus, Nicholas Rudnytzy read a research entitled *From One Exile to Another: Metropolitan Josyf Slipyj at Vatican II* submitted to the attention of attendees by Dr. Karim Schelkens, who is the Secretary to the Centre for the Study of the Second Vatican Council at KU Leuven, and a member of the Executive Committee of the Cardinal Willebrands Research Center at Tilburg University in Netherlands. Dr. Schelkens based his paper on the diaries of

Council participants, Cardinal John Willebrands, who played a key role in Slipyj's departure from the USSR in early 1963; and Metropolitan Maskym Hermaniuk, CSsR, from the Archeparchy of Winnipeg. A political overview of the Moscow-Vatican relations in times of Vatican II set the background to Cardinal Josyf Slipyj's turbulent experience upon his arrival to Rome, an event that was given no media coverage in the Western world in order to avoid possible tension with Moscow. The return of the Metropolitan of Kyiv-Halyi after eighteen years of confinement by the Soviets forced him to re-invent himself, and his surroundings. The

combined context of Slipyj being in a "second exile" and the often fast and tumultuous evolutions at the Second Vatican Council made this all the more complex. Hence, the Metropolitan's rapid adaptation proved to be a difficult process, both on the level of Slipyj's pastoral endeavors and hopes with raising the Kyiv See to the rank of a patriarchate being of the top priority. As Schelkens emphasized, Cardinal Slipyj's unequivocal petition to the Council to establish the Kyiv-Lviv Patriarchate set a discord among the members of the Ukrainian Conference of Bishops at Vatican II, and troubled both the Russian observers

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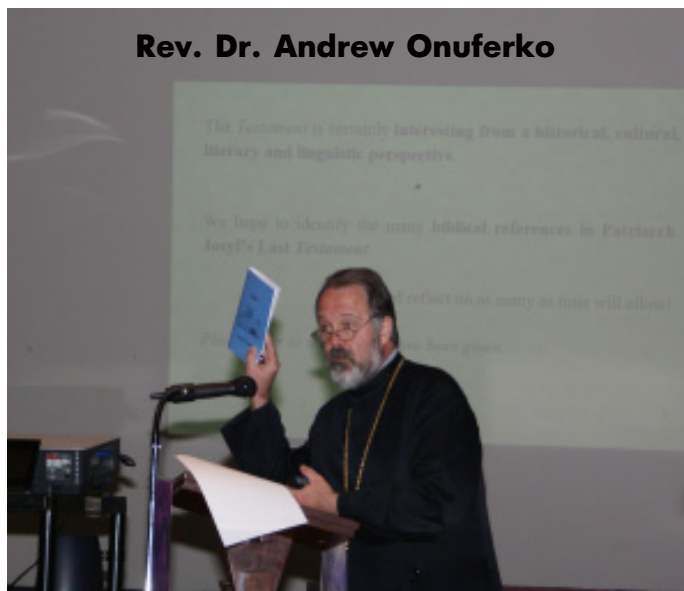
# 120th anniversary of the Confessor of Faith Cardinal Josyf Slipyj (1892-1984) is commemorated at La Salle University.

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and the Vatican diplomats with its political implications. Much attention has been devoted to Metropolitan Slipyj's role as a Council Father, the mission highlighted by his care to prevent his church from Latinizing tendencies within an overall Latin Council, and his emphasis on its distinct position against the Russian Orthodox. Schelkens discussed less than favorable circumstances in which Patriarch Josyf established the Ukrainian Catholic University in 1963, in order to secure seminary and university education for Ukrainian Greek Catholics, and to safeguard the Byzantine character of the community in the diaspora. On the Roman front, his concern was to keep his church out of the centralizing grip of the Vatican forces, while on the side of the Ukrainian side: he was keen on safeguarding the Eastern character of his church, steering it away from Latinizing tendencies. In conclusion, Schelkens expressed his admiration of the force and intensity with which Patriarch Josyf Slipyj acted during Vatican II.

Rev. Dr. Andrew Onuferko, the Roman and

Maria Wynnyckyj Teaching and Research Fellow at the Metropolitan Andrey Sheptytsky Institute of Eastern Christian Studies (Faculty of Theology, Saint Paul University) in Ottawa, Canada, offered his paper on "Yet a little while and the world will see me no more" (John 14:19). *Biblical language and references in the Testament of Patriarch Josyf*. The speaker, who was a student of Patriarch Slipyj's, emphasized the fact that the Confessor of Faith had put much thought into how he wanted to be remembered and the vision he had for his legacy. Indeed, according to the printed full text, which closed with a personal handwritten and signed note, work on this reflection lasted 11 years: the *Testament* was begun in 1970 and was completed in December 1981, three years before his death. With this, the speaker identified and analyzed the many biblical references in Patriarch Josyf's *Last Testament*. For the purpose of his presentation, Rev. Onuferko identified twenty-one thematic points in two main sections of the *Testament*: Autobiographical Reflections (education and



scholarly activity; "way of the cross" as bishop and confessor of the faith; exhortation to Christian witness; release from imprisonment; construction in Rome – symbols of scholarship, prayer and righteousness; appeal to monastic and religious orders; Second Vatican Council and the question of raising the Ukrainian Church to patriarchal status), and Key Issues for the Future (struggle for the Patriarchate following Vatican II; appeal to the faithful regarding the Patriarchate; appeal to persevere in the face of contacts between Rome and Moscow, which disregard Greek-Catholics; on commemorating the Patriarch in liturgical services; in search of

Church unity: Ukrainian ecumenism; address to the episcopate; vision-revelation: on the Daughter Churches in the emigration; vision-revelation: on the Church of Kyiv; fatherly address to his closest collaborators on the "Roman island"; last testament regarding burial: Rome, Lviv, Kyiv; exhortation to perseverance in the words of the Epistle to the Ephesians; final blessing (2 Cor 13:14).) Thus, Rev. Onuferko analyzed the use of biblical quotations within each of the segments, with a total of 44 direct and 3 indirect biblical quotes. In his concluding remarks, the speaker noted that many

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changes had occurred since that day when the *Testament* was publically read at Patriarch Slipyj's funeral. His Church is "no longer a persecuted entity struggling for survival in an openly atheistic state. A new generation of faithful has come of age, born in vastly different circumstances: freedom and opportunity in Ukraine, assimilation pressures and fourth-wave immigration outside its borders. The Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church has gradually reestablished its ecclesial and pastoral structures. If his *Testament* is any indication, he would insist that in this pilgrimage of earthly life, the Word of God remain a constant companion and guide, a source of "superhuman endurance" and "mysterious strength"."

William J. Tighe, who is Associate Professor of History, Muhlenberg College, Allentown, Pennsylvania, spoke about "A Parallel Between Cardinal Slipyj and Pope Benedict XVI" in terms of liturgical translations. He approached the two translations into Ukrainian of the Divine Liturgy that were in use in the Ukrainian Catholic Church,

that prepared under the auspices of the late Cardinal Slipyj and promulgated in 1968, and that promulgated in 1988 by the hierarchical synod of the church.

The speaker emphasized that the promulgation by the Holy See on March 28, 2001 of the "instruction" *Liturgiam Authenticam: On the Use of Vernacular Languages in the Publication of the Books of the Roman Liturgy* declared that "the original text, insofar as possible, must be translated integrally and in the most exact manner, without omissions or additions in terms of their content, and without paraphrases or glosses. Any adaptation to the characteristics or the nature of the various vernacular languages is to be sober and discreet." Although this document was issued during the pontificate of John Paul II and not Benedict XVI, and it came forth from the Vatican's Congregation for Divine Worship and not from the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith of which the then Cardinal Ratzinger was Prefect.

Thus, the speaker says, it is worth examining Cardinal Slipyj's writings and other archival

materials from the period after his release from Soviet captivity in 1963 in an attempt to discover whether he ever reflected directly or indirectly on the matter of principles of liturgical translation, especially in the course of the preparation of the 1968 Ukrainian liturgical translation. Another avenue for the future research would be to examine any critiques that might have been made of that translation, especially in the years leading up to the promulgation of the 1988 translation. In the English-speaking world, since the principles enunciated in *Liturgiam Authenticam* in 2001 eventually bore fruit ten years later in the promulgation of a new English translation of the Roman Rite Mass, Ukrainian Catholic churchmen need to take a serious look about whether they can plausibly retain an English translation which seems to be based on principles which have been rejected by Rome, and which incorporated two items, the Creed and the Lord's Prayer, directly and, with the exception or reverting to the traditional "I believe" instead of "We believe" (as Rome, also, has now done in the new

translation), unchanged from the now superseded Latin Rite translation of 1973.

In the course of the discussion conducted by Dr. Andrew Sorokowski, questions about the particularity of the Church, language of the Divine Liturgy, and the works of Patriarch Josyf Slipyj were answered by the speaker.

Dr. Albert Kipa, Professor Laureate of the Department of Languages, Literatures and Cultures, Muhlenberg College, Allentown, Pennsylvania, offered concluding remarks on the Conference, acknowledging the efforts of the organizers, the participation of the attendees and the generosity of sponsors: the Central and East European Studies program and the Religion Department at La Salle University; the St. Sophia Religious Association; the Shevchenko Scientific Society; the Ukrainian Selfreliance Credit Union in Philadelphia; and the Wolodymyr Rak Foundation.

**St. Sophia  
Press Bureau**

# *Shroud of Turin*

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*March 3 – 17, 2012*



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Email: StNicholasUCC@gmail.com





## Pictures from Ascension Manor's Final Endorsement Loan Closing at the Philadelphia HUD office on February 14, 2012



Monsignor Waslo signing (Loan) Closing Documents on behalf of Ascension Manor, Inc.

(Pictured) Owner's attorney **Heather Swan** from law firm Carney, Kelehan, Bresler, Bennett & Scherr LLP, and **Monsignor Peter Waslo**.



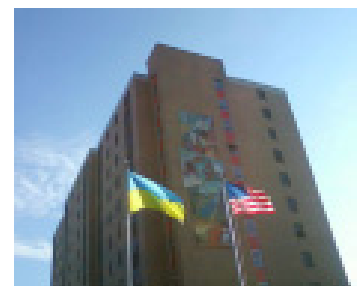
Philadelphia HUD legal team finalizes (Loan) Closing Documents with Owner's Counsel HUD Attorney **William Edwards**, HUD Attorney Advisor **Andrea Durham**, and Owner's attorney **Heather Swan**.



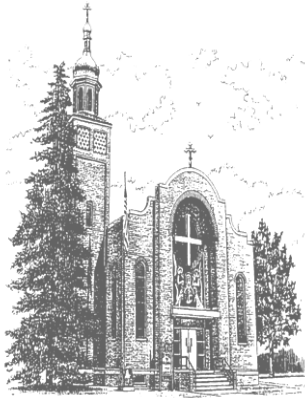
**Post Closing Picture taken in  
HUD's Executive Conference Room**

**Monsignor Peter Waslo**, HUD Chief of Production **Michael Perretta**, HUD Director of Project Management **Rodell Burton**, HUD Multifamily Hub Director **Encarnacion "Connie" Loukatos**, Owner's Representative (from The Michaels Organization) **Bill Gorodetzer**.

Located one block from the Ukrainian Catholic Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception.



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Equal Housing Opportunity



# Saint Michael Ukrainian Catholic Church

45 South Second Street Frackville, Pennsylvania 17931-1629  
570-874-1101 Fax: 570-874-0448 e-mail: IBAH@aol.com

February 29, 2012

FROM: Rev. John M. Fields  
RE: Pysanky (decorated Ukrainian Easter egg) Workshop Scheduled at St. Michael's Church



FRACKVILLE, PA. —St. Michael Ukrainian Catholic Church, West Oak Street (Route 61) will sponsor a two session workshop on the Ukrainian folk art of decorating Easter eggs, known as pysanky. The sessions will be held on Sunday, March 18 and Monday, March 19 from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. in the parish social hall.

All participants must be at least 12 years of age. Workshop registration fee is \$20.00 per person, which includes the two sessions of the workshop and writing instruments, dyes, candle and eggs.

Since each two-day workshop is limited to 25 participants to provide maximum individual instruction, those interested should register as soon as possible.

The art of pysanky utilizes a batik method of decorating the eggs. The process is simple, but requires a steady hand. The egg designs are drawn with beeswax by use of a stylus (kistka) on the egg. The egg is then dipped in the dyes, beginning with the lightest colors, usually yellow. Additional designs are then drawn with wax on the egg and it is dipped in a darker color, such as orange or red. The process is repeated several times. By the time of the last dipping, the egg is completely covered with beeswax. When the wax is removed over a candle with a soft cloth, the once white egg, emerges from under the wax with the beauty of the intricate geometric designs in a rainbow of color that is now a Ukrainian pysanky--the decorated Easter egg.

All are invited to learn this traditional Ukrainian Easter Egg decorating folk art.

To register or for more information phone 570-874-3777.





SISTERS OF SAINT BASIL THE GREAT  
Come and See Weekend  
March 16-18, 2012



The Sisters of Saint Basil are planning a “Come and See” weekend on March 16-18, 2012 at the Basilian Sisters Motherhouse in Jenkintown, PA. Come and visit. You are welcome to spend some time with the Sisters in prayer, community and ministry. Get to know who we are and what we do to build up the kingdom of God.

Let us know if you are coming by March 12, 2012

Call, e-mail, or write us at

710 Fox Chase Road, Fox Chase Manor, PA 19046

Or

Sister Ann (412.260.1607—[srannl@aol.com](mailto:srannl@aol.com))

Sister Joann (215.379.3998—[vickis@stbasils.com](mailto:vickis@stbasils.com))



Altar in the Holy of Holies with the Resurrection Apsidal Icon  
St. Vladimir Ukrainian Catholic Church, Scranton PA

### ***Standing Up For Conscience***

There is a lesson to be learned from past battles, particularly with the ongoing debate over the conscience clause of the Patient Protection and Affordable Health Care Act. While very recently President Obama announced a change to the conscience clause, past debates on this issue have been very instructive, particularly with regards to the role of conscience in our every day lives.

As practicing Catholic Christians, if we are true to our beliefs, if we are truly orthodox in our practices (I say orthodox in the true sense of the Greek word "right believing"), we must follow our consciences in doing the right thing. This does not merely include fighting against unjust legislation such as what is presented in the Patient Protection and Affordable Health Care Act, but we also must use our consciences in everything we do in life. Our very beliefs in God literally shape us into a type of person – ideally, a person of virtue who will do the right thing even though doing the right thing may be painful at times. A human person can never merely make decisions on facts alone – we are not computing machines without souls that act on the instructions of a master. Conscience is that gift from God that truly makes us caring human beings that can make truly informed decisions.

Part of our vocation as Christians, no matter whether you are a priest, deacon, religious monk or nun, or layperson, is that we are called to allow God and Church to form our consciences. Once our consciences are properly formed, we are then called to use them. If we do not defend our freedom to be guided by conscience, we will become nothing more than mindless sheep. Never forget to use the gifts God has given you and called you to use, lest you lose it to someone who does not want you to have it at all.

Rev. Paul J. Makar

*Perhaps you feel that God may be calling  
you to service in His Church?*

If you would like to discuss God's call to a  
vocation in your life, do not hesitate to contact:

Rev. Paul J. Makar  
Director of Vocations  
Ukrainian Catholic Archeparchy of Philadelphia  
827 North Franklin Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19123-2097

Phone: 1-215-627-0143  
Fax: 1-215-627-0377

E-mail: [ukrvocations@catholic.org](mailto:ukrvocations@catholic.org)



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Religious Men and Women!***



Rev. Vasyl Sivinskyi

St. Michael Ukrainian Catholic Church, Baltimore,  
MD, and Sts. Peter and Paul Ukrainian Catholic  
Church, Curtis Bay, MD



## Pastoral letter of His Beatitude Sviatoslav (Shevchuk) to the faithful of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church for Great Lent 2012

«Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand!»  
*Mt. 4:17*

*Dear in Christ!*

With these words of our Divine Savior, the Church of Christ is calling today each and every one of us to commence a blessed time of the Great Fast. The name “Great” of this fast is not accidental: it is caused by those God’s gifts and fruits for our spiritual life, which we can attain during this time, provided we spend it worthily. The greatness of this time is likewise determined by the depth of a spiritual change of our person and our life, which will be the result of the meeting with the merciful and loving Heavenly Father.

Hence, how do we live out this period worthily, so as to transform and enrich our lives? First of all, dear in Christ, we need to remember that fasting does not only mean limiting ourselves in food and entertainment. Fasting is primarily to keep away from sin, from evil habits and passions. It is also a rejection of indifference, evil thoughts and selfishness. Lent is an invitation, addressed to each of us, wounded by sins, encumbered with infirmities and depleted with the daily chores, to surrender ourselves to the Lord’s embrace.

The Fathers and spiritual teachers of the Church, urging Christians to live out the fast worthily, called it a time of spiritual awakening and renewal of man; they compared it with the spiritual spring, during which the divine life awakens in our souls: “...When winter ends and we start coming closer to the spring warmth, a seafarer takes his boat again out into the sea, a soldier cleans his weapons and trains his horse for a fight, a peasant sharpens his tools, a traveler, having felt a surge of strength, girds and embarks on a journey... And so let us also, at this time of the coming of the spiritual spring, similarly fix our spiritual weapons as soldiers, let us sharpen our tools as farmers, and, like the true leaders, let us take into our hands the boat of our spirit so as to be prepared to endure the heaps of the waves of senseless passions and, as the pilgrims heading towards our heavenly homeland, let us begin the fulfillment of our spiritual journey” (St. John Chrysostom, *Word to the Antiochian People*, 3).

Lent is a special time of repentance and penance. Just as in nature, a normal sign of an early spring is the awakening of all creatures to a new life, similarly the human soul, through repentance and penance, comes to life and, having been warmed by the warmth of God’s mercy and love, is freed from the dead stiffness and produces sprouts of a new life in the Holy Spirit. Whoever honestly admits his sins in the Holy Sacrament of Penance, feels the good-giving action of the warmth of God’s life-giving love. And just as spring wins over winter, so the power of the Lord’s forgiveness wins over fear, weakness and disbelief in us, proving that the Divine love is stronger than our sin and that there is no evil force, which would be able to resist the saving mercy of the Heavenly Father. That is why Prophet David, in repenting burst, sings to the Lord: “May Your compassion come to me that I may live, for Your law is my delight” (*Ps. 119:77*). Revived through repentance and penance and united with the Lord in the Holy Communion, a believer blossoms with God’s beauty of the righteous life and becomes the bearer of hope for his environs as well as for the entire society. For just as sin has a devastating impact not only on a sinner himself, but on all of his environs as well, conversion and repentance bring healing to our relationship with God, our neighbor and all of the creation.

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# Pastoral letter of His Beatitude Sviatoslav (Shevchuk) to the faithful of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church for Great Lent 2012

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Lent is a time of intensive prayer. Giving up during this period on entertainment, we concomitantly need to pay more attention to the communication with God: through participation in Lenten liturgical services in the church as well as through longer and more intense prayer in family circle and solitude. We cannot do without our attention a practice that has recently been introduced in our Church – the reading of God’s Word. Every day the faithful, whether alone or with the family or gathered in prayer groups in parishes, reflect upon and pray with some excerpts from the Sacred Scripture. In this way, the Word of God becomes for us a spiritual nourishment as well as recalls for us that “man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God” (*Mt. 4:4*). I fervently entrust to continue and spread this pious practice. And for those who have not started doing this yet, may Lent become an opportunity to begin to get to know the Word of God as well as to live it out ever more.

Charitable deeds are likewise a necessary condition of Lenten spiritual journey. The Lord, through the words of the Prophet Isaiah, directs to all of us a special call, showing the meaning of an authentic fast: “Is this not the fast that choose? ... Is it not to divide your bread with the hungry and bring the homeless poor into the house; when you see the naked to cover him; and not to hide yourself from your own flesh?” (*Is. 58:6-7*). Just as in nature, the emergence of fresh green shoots in spring exposes the life of a plant, so the Christian almsgiving is a sign of the spiritual awakening of man, his openness to God and neighbor as well as a compelling witness of the living faith, “working through love” (*Gal. 5:6*). All Christians are called to do the almsgiving, regardless of wealth or financial capability. St. Pope Leo the Great teaches that “nothing can get into the way of our charity, with which we fulfill a vocation of the love of God and neighbor... Not only the rich and wealthy can perform the charity works vis-a-vis their neighbor, but also those that are poor and with the limited fortunes... Almsgiving transforms inequality in terms of the earthly goods into equality in obtaining the heavenly gifts” (*Word on the occasion of Lent, 6, 1-2*).

Dear in Christ! The time of Lent opens for us the way to Heaven. Let’s embark on it in the spirit of repentance, prayer and almsgiving. Let us walk it together, growing in the grace of the Holy Spirit. Let me remind you about the obligation to partake in this blessed time in the Holy Sacraments of Confession and Communion. May Lent grant us with the renewal of the spiritual life, the awakening of the Christian zeal and love of God and neighbor in our parish communities and monastery ambits! I implore our Father, “who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth” (*1 Tm. 2:4*), to lovingly bring all of you closer to His merciful paternal heart and, having forgiven your sins, make you, through the power of the Holy Spirit, the partakers of the glory of the resurrection of His Divine Son.

The blessing of the Lord be upon you!

† SVIATOSLAV

*Given in Kyiv,  
at the Patriarchal Cathedral of the Resurrection of Christ,  
on Cheesefare Saturday, 25<sup>th</sup> February 2012 A. D.*

## 29th Annual PYSANKA WORKSHOP

### & EASTER BAZAAR

*Sunday, March 25<sup>th</sup>, 2012*



#### **PYSANKA WORKSHOP: 2 pm - 5 pm (registration 1-2 pm)**

Learn to decorate Easter Eggs the traditional Ukrainian way. Detailed A/V presentation, personalized instruction, materials & supplies included.

Workshop Fee: Adults: \$20 | Children under 12: \$12

**BUFFET LUNCHEON "Traditional Ukrainian":** 11 a.m. until the food is gone.

**EASTER BAZAAR:** 12 noon - 4 pm. Many vendors --Traditional Ukrainian arts and crafts, pysanka kits, how-to books, videos, traditional foods & baked goods, smoked meats: kovbasa (smoked sausage), kabanos, bochok (rib bacon), pashtet (liver pate), poliadvysia (lean Canadian bacon).

#### **UKRAINIAN CATHOLIC NATIONAL SHRINE**

4250 Harewood Road, NE, Washington, DC 20017

(across from the Catholic University of America)

<http://www.ucns-holyfamily.org> or call Parish (202) 526-3737

Nearest Metro Station: Brookland/CUA on the Red Line

## A Parish Comes to Life

Nestled atop a high mountain in the North Eastern Anthracite region of Pennsylvania stands Protection of the Most Holy Mother of God (Saint Mary's) Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church in **McAdoo, PA.**

Founded in 1891, it is one of the oldest Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church communities in America. The past four years have been very exciting times for St. Mary's, as they have been times of great growth and change. Under the shepherding and watchful eye of the Pastor, The Very Reverend Father James Melnic, St. Mary's embarked upon a major project of rebirth and new life both spiritually and physically. Father James leads the faithful in celebrating Faith, worship, and renewing a sense of community with the teachings of Christ as its guide. He also initiated several projects of building

restoration, which primarily included the restoration of the church's domes.

Four years ago, the beloved Pastor, Fr. James, assumed pastorate of this little mountain congregation. The challenges were great, but they were not insurmountable. The obstacles at times became great, yet somehow God provided His helping hand and sufficient grace for the congregation to renew its spiritual and temporal life. Additionally, an intensive program of religious education for both children and adults was initiated. And although attention was also given to the needs of the physical structure of St. Mary's church building, we are more than a building, and a true church means people, members of the family of Christ.

Time and the elements have not been



kind to the church building, and after 104 years of wind, rain, heat, and cold, the need for repair was especially notable in the condition of St. Mary's domes and crosses. The formerly brilliant baroque style domes seemed to call out for help. Father James and the parishioners responded by instituting the "Save the Domes" annual 3-Day parish Homecoming Picnic. The project generated much prayer, enthusiasm, and spirit among the faithful. Certainly working together for a common goal after over 40 years since the last parish picnic presented many challenges and a complete learning curve. The parishioners rose and met the challenge.

Some other improvements blossomed almost in a chain of events. The men of the parish finished the processional sidewalk circling the

church which lay incomplete for some time. This is so important for the Services and Processions of Good Friday, Pascha, Dormition Vespers and other liturgical processions. The dedicated ladies and men of the parish rolled up their sleeves to raise funds by preparing both ethnic and non-ethnic foods for sale to the townsfolk. Artifacts such as the main chandelier, Processional Cross, and Rapidia were purchased from the former St. Nicholas Ukrainian Catholic Church in Mahanoy City, PA. Each of these objects were refurbished and installed through the generosity of various donors from within and outside of the parish.

After a thorough search of various contractors, and almost by the hand of God, Mr. Richard DeStefano, a Greek Catholic contractor from

*(continued on next page)*



*Msgr. James Melnic*



## A Parish Comes to Life

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Freeland, PA, agreed to take on our project to "Save the Domes". During the excitement and bustle of this last year's Fourth Annual Home Coming Picnic, the massive scaffolding rose up and encompassed the church

so the work could begin. Working eagerly during the parish picnic, just seeing the scaffolding and progress generated more interest and spirit now that all could see progress as the golden domes were slowly glittering brilliantly

in the day's sunlight, pointing all to heaven, and giving God praise once again. We now continue to raise money to complete the



project's cost. Other improvements include the remodeling and re-tiling of the church's two sacristies and vestibule, along with the installation of Holy icons on the vestibule wall.

Catholic Church in Hazleton, PA or by emailing him at [stmarysmcadoo@aol.com](mailto:stmarysmcadoo@aol.com).

Please enjoy the various stages of progress as documented in the photos as we, "Save the Domes"

If you wish to contribute to this project, you may do so by contacting Msgr. James Melnic at St. Michael Ukrainian Greek

Praise God, and God bless you!



### Meatless Meal for LENT **BAKED HADDOCK FISH DINNER**

Sponsored by  
Ss. Cyril & Methodius Ukrainian Catholic Church  
**Olyphant, Pa.**

**FRIDAY MARCH 30, 2012**  
**5:00 – 7:00 p.m**

At the **REGAL ROOM (Ballroom entrance)**  
**216 Lackawanna Avenue**  
**Olyphant, Pa.**

Sit Down or Take Out!!  
**\$10.00 per ticket/dinner**  
Baked haddock, potato, vegetable, cole slaw, roll  
and dessert

**Call 570-489-4348 for Reservations**

**Deadline for Tickets is**  
**Monday, March 26, 2012**

### Ukrainian/Slovak - Meatless Meal for LENT **PAGASH SALE**

Sponsored by  
Ss. Cyril & Methodius Ukrainian Catholic Church,  
**Olyphant, Pa**

**Sunday March 18, 2012 and**  
**Sunday March 25, 2012**

**\$12.00 per tray (Please specify: onions or**  
**no-onions)**

**Ss. Cyril & Methodius Parish Hall**  
**207 River Street, Olyphant,**

**Pick up 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. on Sunday**

**For RESERVATIONS Call 570-489-2476 or**  
**570-876-1008**

**Deadline is March 14, 2012**

**PASTORAL MESSAGE  
OF THE SYNOD OF THE UKRAINIAN GREEK CATHOLIC CHURCH  
TO OUR FAITHFUL  
ON THE OCCASION OF THE 120TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BIRTH OF  
PATRIARCH JOSYF (SLIPYJ)**

Dear [Brothers and Sisters] in Christ,

Each anniversary of our Servants of God and Confessors of faith offers us an opportunity to commemorate their good names and pray in unison with all God's children of our Church for the repose of their souls, as well as to ask God to remember them here on earth, - we do that continually. The observance of anniversaries is an opportunity to reflect on the brilliant lights of our church history, which we do by reading their words and meditating on their works. This makes us partakers of their wisdom and appreciative heirs of their enlightenment.

This year our Church commemorates the 120th anniversary of the birth of the confessor of faith, Patriarch Josyf (Slipyj). Although the date is a three digit number, this should not put us off. Patriarch Josyf is our contemporary! This is apparent when one looks into the circumstances of his life or becomes familiar with his pastorals. With his vision of the future, he was several decades before his time and so stands beside us today.

Let us first look at one almost unnoticeable but significant example from his biography. In 1957 Josyf (Slipyj), already a Metropolitan, was in exile in the village of Maklakovo in the Krasnoyars'kyy region. Internment, persecution, even the prohibition to serve as a priest - were his lot. Most people in his predicament, in today's way of thinking, would at least dream of returning to their homeland to live out the rest of their lives very quietly and peacefully, taking care not to call attention of the ruling powers to themselves. Instead, Metropolitan Josyf chose to write a pastoral letter to the faithful, with the surprising but challenging title, "Seek Greatness". Was this pastoral letter meant for his contemporaries? Formally yes. But was it really necessary for him to call the attention of his countrymen, who in great numbers were at that time sacrificing their lives for their national shrines? Isn't it, instead, a pastoral call to us, the present generation, for whom it's fashionable to wish "for everything right now", and in which there is less and less distinction between right and wrong, the sacred and the profane, the great and the base?

*"As was pointed out earlier, human beings grow with their ambitions, with their designs. High ideals elevate humans, while lower and sinful ones ruin them. It is true, not everyone was born a genius and God did not assign to everyone the mission to accomplish saving deeds and to be able to change circumstances as in a whirlpool. But everyone has been given the desire to seek what is great, to ask God for it, and to intensely support great spiritual endeavors, because it is from small bricks that great things are built. Everyone can do good things, and in everything that is good, there is something great. A person can use every passing moment to earn eternity, and in a small way to grasp eternity."*

Patriarch Josyf reflected the fate of our Ukrainian Catholic Church and our nation in the 20th century. He was, as were many others, illegally stripped of the freedom of worship with his co-believers. With millions of other Ukrainians, he was doomed to suffer abuse in the torture chambers of the NKVD and to witnessing the faith in the Gulag. But if while imprisoned he was the "mute witness of the Church" ("Testament"), then later, when he was in exile, he became the voice of the "silent Church" and her spiritual buttress, never forgetting all the while those of his countrymen who were still captive:

*"I turn my thoughts to all my brothers in Ukraine...to those who suffer at home and to those who are incarcerated in jails, prisons and work camps...Among them I see new fighters - scientists, writers, artists, farmers, workers. I see among them seekers of truth and defenders of justice. I hear their voices raised in*

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## PASTORAL MESSAGE

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*the defense of basic human rights and a more humane society. Admiringly I watch them, how they protect the Ukrainian language, enrich their Ukrainian culture, and how, with all the power of their minds and hearts, they continue to preserve the Ukrainian soul. And I empathize with them all, because it is for these ideals that they suffer and are persecuted as criminals.” (Testament)*

All these words are spoken to us also – to all who live in circumstances of selective justice - the gradual curtailments of our rights to gather together, to demonstrate, to receive and spread truthful information while in a time of repeated repressions in our own society of our native language and culture. Unfortunately, in Ukraine there is no cessation of the evil tradition of the misuse of power, contemptuous scorn of the dignity of man, violations of national, cultural and religious rights, disdain for one’s own traditions, all this accompanied by a pursuit for titles and a thirst for power. But this is countered by a tradition of “common cause”, solidarity with those who are in need and in pain. And to this the witness of Patriarch Josyf is a living example and testimony to this.

Today, when a lack of unity is once again our national misfortune; when our country is artificially fragmented by regional, historical, linguistic and cultural differences, the views of Patriarch Josyf regarding national unity once again become our guides. This man of the Church did not need to be convinced of what is so hard to convince our contemporaries of today, that “the first spring of social unrest is not material, but spiritual poverty.” (from *Memo of the Traditional Ukrainian Churches*, December 1, 2011). In his understanding, political and national unity comes of spiritual unity, the guarantee of which is a single common Patriarchate of the Ukrainian Church.

*“ The Patriarchate is a visible sign of the maturity and self government of a sui iuris Church and a powerful factor in ecclesial and civic life, an assurance of religious and national unity. The foundation for a Patriarchate is in the mature awareness of specific ecclesiastical and national treasures, in its cultural and historic achievements and values, in its labor and sacrifices. We, Greek-Catholics and Orthodox, are united by the tradition of our native Christianity, common church and national heritage, and two millennia of one culture. We are united by the common struggle toward the self-government of our own Church, for its uniqueness, of which a visible sign will be a sole Patriarchate of the Ukrainian Church.” (Testament)*

This Servant of God also called attention to the prominent role of the Church, not only in the spiritual and national rebirth of Ukraine, but also in the protection of Ukrainian identity in the global sphere. Indeed, for generations past, the spiritual mother of Ukrainians had been the Kyivan Metropolia.

*“On the path of its history her children were scattered throughout many countries, among many nations, and they forgot about the Mother Church that gave them life. Help them to find this Mother Church. ” (Testament)*

Finding himself in the diaspora, Patriarch Josyf became the link between all dispersed parts of our Church that by the will of Providence found themselves on different continents, between those persecuted in Ukraine and those “scattered everywhere”. The Church in diaspora not only survived, it became a universal Church, without which it is difficult to even imagine the scope of the Catholic Church world-wide.

Significant in view of this is the present dialogue among the Ukrainian Churches of the Kyivan tradition in regard to the rebirth of a united Kyivan Church. This in itself is a call for patriarchal dialogue that has come to be entertained in past decades. This call has resonated in the hearts of Ukrainian Christians of the Kyivan tradition, even in spite of confessional differences.

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# PASTORAL MESSAGE

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Patriarch Josyf's understanding that it's not possible to confine the Universal Church to just one culture, nation or rite, was visionary. For him unity meant unity in diversity, where there are guarantees to the particularity of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church. Today this is the prevalent logic in church reasoning. For this reason, the two fundamental principles with which Patriarch Slipyj characterized the individuality of our Church, seem normative today: the first – communion with Rome, and the second – faithfulness to Eastern Christian Byzantine tradition.

Patriarch Josyf's long "path of renunciation, of carrying the cross and witnessing to Him [Christ]" – the 18 years of his captivity as a "prisoner for Christ" – captures our attention. But truly worthy of our admiration, at this time of a massive lack of faith, indifference, and paralysis of will, is his titanic work for the rebirth of the Church in settlements abroad.

*"I tried as hard as I could to find a way out of this almost hopeless situation in order to lift the Church and the nation from ruin, to give to them new life. It was necessary to begin the work of regeneration at the root itself, in the very foundation. And I saw this foundation in education, in prayer, in work, and in a righteous Christian life." (Testament)*

His faith was unmovable, and his energy – inexhaustible. His attack on human indifference and rigidity was unrelenting. His example of a dedicated life disarmed his foes and inspired adherents. His diagnosis of social disease was accurate, and the proposed course of treatment, a salvation.

How are we to thank God today that the Ukrainian Catholic Church, tutored by the great Metropolitan Andrey (Sheptytsky) was able, during that stormy time, to "seek greatness" and nurture in our nation, a man great and strong, with whom this Church survived martyrdom and challenges with dignity, giving witness to the world of the substance of the Gospels by which we still live today!

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ! Commemorating the 120th anniversary of the birth of Patriarch Josyf, we thank our all-merciful God for the gift of his life and his witness of faith, which are great treasures not only for our Church and the Ukrainian nation but also for the universal Church. We encourage the faithful to take part in all celebratory commemorations, those organized by the Church and those organized by civil authorities during this anniversary year. We call everyone to take part in the Ukrainian Pilgrimage to Zarvanytsya, July 15-16, which will be dedicated this year to the memory of Patriarch Josyf. We urge all to visit the homestead of this famous son of our nation, which are found not far from Zarvanytsya, in the village of Zazdrist'. It will afford us an opportunity us to draw on the spiritual vitality of the very wellspring of the faith and heroic service of this witness of faith to our Church and our people. And the best way to honor the Servant of God, Patriarch Josyf, is to make his ideals our own, and seeking his intercession before the altar of the Most High, to try to live by them and to affirm them in our Ukrainian nation.

May the Blessings of the Lord be upon you!

From the Synod of Eparchs  
of the Ukrainian Catholic Church  
+ Sviatoslav

Given in Kyiv, in the Cathedral of the Resurrection of Christ  
February 9, 2012

*Adapted from the article on <http://www.pokrovany.com/Documents/Slipyj%20Letter%20English.pdf>*

*Note: The Ukrainian version of this Pastoral Letter was in the February 19, 2012 Ukrainian issue of "The Way".*



## United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

3211 FOURTH STREET NE • WASHINGTON DC 20017-1194 • 202-541-3103 • FAX 202-541-3166

### BULLETIN INSERT

#### **Sweeping HHS Mandate Stands, Violating Conscience Rights and Religious Liberty Congress Must Act to Fix the Problem**

On January 20, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) reaffirmed a rule that virtually all private health care plans must cover sterilization, abortifacients, and contraception. The exemption provided for "religious employers" was so narrow that it failed to cover the vast majority of faith-based organizations—including Catholic hospitals, universities, and charities—that help millions every year. Ironically, not even Jesus and his disciples would have qualified for the exemption, because it excludes those who mainly serve people of another faith.

On February 10, the Obama Administration made this rule final "without change"; delayed enforcement for a year against religious nonprofits that were still not exempted (our charities, hospitals, and colleges); and promised to develop more regulations to "accommodate" them by the end of that additional year. But, as explained below, that promised "accommodation" still forces them to pay for "services" that violate their religious convictions.

#### **The original rule that violated our religious liberty so severely has not been changed, but finalized.**

After touting meaningful changes in the mandate, HHS instead finalized the original rule that was first issued in August 2011 "without change." So the offensive definition of "religious employer"—which excludes our charities, hospitals, and colleges because they serve people of other faiths—is still in place, and those institutions are still subject to the mandate.

#### **HHS has promised some kind of "accommodation," but only after the election.**

HHS said it would take an additional year to develop more regulations to "accommodate" religiously-affiliated charities, schools, and hospitals that still fall outside the "religious employer" exemption. The impact of these additional rules will not be felt until after the election, the only point of public accountability for the Executive Branch. This eliminates an important incentive for HHS to provide the best protection for religious liberty

#### **The promised "accommodation"—even at its best—would still force our institutions to violate their beliefs.**

Under the proposed "accommodation," if an employee of these religious institutions wants coverage of contraception or sterilization directly from the insurer, the objecting employer is still forced to pay for it as a part of the employer's insurance plan. Since there is no other source, the funds to pay for that coverage must come from the premiums of the employer and fellow employees, even those who object in conscience.

#### **There is no exemption for objecting insurers, secular employers, for-profit religious employers, or individuals.**

The U.S. bishops defend religious liberty for all, and so have repeatedly identified all the stakeholders in the process whose religious freedom is threatened by the mandate—all employers, insurers, and individuals, not just religious employers. Now, all insurers, including self-insurers, must provide the coverage to any employee who wants it. In turn, all individuals who pay premiums have no escape from subsidizing that coverage. And only employers that are both non-profit and religious may qualify for the limited "accommodation."

We urgently need legislation to correct the mandate's threats to religious liberty and conscience rights. The Respect for Rights of Conscience Act has been introduced in Congress (H.R. 1179, S. 1467) to ensure that those who participate in the market for health insurance "retain the right to provide, purchase, or enroll in health coverage that is consistent with their religious beliefs and moral convictions."

#### **ACTION: Contact your U.S. Representative by e-mail, phone, or FAX letter:**

- Call the U.S. Capitol switchboard at: 202-224-3121, or call your Members' local offices.
- Send your email to Congress through [www.usccb.org/conscience](http://www.usccb.org/conscience).
- Additional contact info can be found on Members' web sites at: [www.house.gov](http://www.house.gov) and [www.senate.gov](http://www.senate.gov).

**MESSAGE:** "Please co-sponsor and support the Respect for Rights of Conscience Act (H.R. 1179, S. 1467). The Obama administration's decision to mandate coverage of sterilization and contraceptives, including drugs that can cause an abortion, makes passage of this measure especially urgent. Please ensure that the religious liberty and conscience rights of all participants in our nation's health care system are respected."

**WHEN:** Now is the time to build co-sponsors and support. Please act today! Thanks!

# Information from St. Vladimir's in Scranton, PA



March 12 - March 16th



## The 2012 Scranton Eastern Catholic Churches Lenten Mission



*Father Jerome is a Byzantine Franciscan from Holy Dormition Friary in Sybertsville, Pennsylvania and received his seminary training at SS Cyril & Methodius Byzantine Catholic Seminary in Pittsburgh. A teacher before joining the Franciscans, Fr. Jerome was ordained in 2008 and has preached and taught in parishes across the United States.*

*Presented by Rev. Jerome Wolbert, OFM*



**Mission Theme:** St. Paul calls the Church “the Body of Christ.” Jesus calls us “friends” who know what he is about. What does this mean for us who strive to live as Christians? Father Jerome will explore some of dimensions of our life together and personally as members of the Body of Christ.

Monday, March 12: **“Lenten Vespers”** St. Joseph Melkite Greek Catholic Church, 130 St. Francis Cabrini Ave., Scranton. **Christ’s Eyes and Ears.** *The Lord hears the cry of the poor* (Psalm 34:7) Seeing as He sees; hearing as He hears.

Tuesday, March 13: **“Divine Liturgy”** [Concelebrants welcomed] St. Ann Maronite Catholic Church, 1320 Price St., Scranton. **Christ’s Prayer.** *Lord, teach us to pray* (Luke 11:1). More than what we ask for, we learn to pray as Christ.

Wednesday, March 14: **“Lenten Prayer Service”** St. John Ruthenian Catholic Church, 310 Broadway, Scranton. **Christ’s Hands.** *Jesus stretched out his hand and touched him* (Luke: 5:13). Bringing healing to a hurt and broken world.

Thursday, March 15: **“Akathist of the Passion”** St. Vladimir Ukrainian Catholic Church, 430 N. Seventh Ave., Scranton. **Christ’s Suffering Body.** *My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?* (Mark 15:34). Why suffering?

Friday, March 16: **“Liturgy of the Presanctified”** St. Mary Ruthenian Catholic Church, 310 Mifflin Ave., Scranton. **Christ’s Presence.** *I am with you always, until the end of the age* (Matthew 28:20). How are neighbors can hear the best preaching.

*~~~~~*  
*All Mission Services begin at 6:30pm with homily/presentation. The Sacramental Mystery of Forgiveness (Confessions) begins at 6pm. After each service, everyone is invited to remain for refreshments and discussion on the topic of the evening.*

## Second Sunday of the Great Lent



*A few days later, when Jesus again entered Capernaum, the people heard that he had come home. They gathered in such large numbers that there was no room left, not even outside the door, and he preached the word to them. Some men came, bringing to him a paralyzed man, carried by four of them. Since they could not get him to Jesus because of the crowd, they made an opening in the roof above Jesus by digging through it and then lowered the mat the man was lying on. When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralyzed man, "Son, your sins are forgiven." Now some teachers of the law were sitting there, thinking to themselves, "Why does this fellow talk like that? He's blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?" Immediately Jesus knew in his spirit that this was what they were thinking in their hearts, and he said to them, "Why are you thinking these things? Which is easier: to say to this paralyzed man, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up, take your mat and walk'? But I want you to know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins."*

*So he said to the man, "I tell you, get up, take your mat and go home." He got up, took his mat and walked out in full view of them all. This amazed everyone and they praised God, saying, "We have never seen anything like this!" (Mk. 2, 1-12)*

It is easy to picture the scene in today's gospel. In fact, it could be made into a film scene without difficulty. Suppose it was. And suppose that for some reason the sound track failed, and the audience was left just to watch what was going on.

Even without the sound, what was happening would make a lot of sense. Jesus is in a house, and a crowd gathers outside. As he talks about something or other, and the crowd listens, another group of people turns up. Among them is a paralytic man carried on a sort of stretcher by four of them.

Finding their way blocked, they scramble onto the roof with the man they are carrying and start

to make an opening big enough to lower the paralytic down to where Jesus is. Jesus says something to the paralytic, this causes a stir among the scribes, and Jesus speaks to them.

Jesus then speaks again to the paralytic, who suddenly moves, arises, picks up the stretcher and walks out in front of everyone. There is general astonishment among the crowd, and people call out.

To watch a film of today's gospel, without the sound track, would bring out two points. The first is that the arrival of Jesus among us *makes a difference*.

Christians do not simply have a vision of

how things might be, a hope that salvation may or may not happen. Our faith is not only an explanation of how things are, a set of profound insights, together with impressive teachings and quite a few convincing arguments. Jesus makes possible a new way of *living*.

This new way of living begins at baptism and shapes a lifetime's choices and actions. It goes so deep in us, that even death will not stop the transformation God gives us in Christ.

The sudden and unexpected movement of the paralysed man is the dramatic visibility of the difference Jesus Christ makes to our lives. It is healing and empowering,

it is an act of love and it transfigures the disfigured. In the vigorous movement of the one who used to be paralysed, we see an image of what life without limitations will be like — we glimpse the resurrected body.

Yet we need to hear the sound track to understand more of what is going on, to be let into the full story. The second point is that just as the words Jesus speaks are invisible yet real, so he relates to us in ways that go beyond the material to the dimension of the soul, to the spiritual.

We urgently need to be set free from the paralysis of sin, the incapacity to be fully who

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## Second Sunday of the Great Lent

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we are meant to be. The paralytic was not only physically helpless and diminished. The full flow of life in him was blocked in a more intangible way than the paralysis that stopped the free movement of his body.

If we hear the words of Jesus, if we hear the Word that is Jesus, we will begin fully to understand.

In today's gospel, we are first told that Jesus was preaching the word. As the gospel story unfolds, we are given two examples of how effective that word is. First Jesus speaks to the paralytic to tell him that his sins are forgiven — and they are. Then Jesus speaks to him to free him from his paralysis — and he is. God brings things about at every level of our existence, and always for the good.

The healing of the paralytic at every level of his being is a startling picture of what God's love in action looks like. But the narrator of this gospel, St Mark, also tells us something about *our* faith.

By himself, the paralytic cannot reach Christ. A group of people has to bring him along, literally carry him, and they have to persist and overcome difficulties to get to Christ. These people believe in Jesus, they care about the paralytic's needs, and their faith makes them carry someone else in its movement.

As we are told, Jesus turns to the paralytic carried by others on seeing *their* faith. Faith in God is neither idle nor selfish.



March 4, 2012

## METROPOLITAN STEFAN'S MEDITATION FOR 3<sup>RD</sup> SUNDAY OF GREAT FAST

Every one of us has a deep desire to live and not merely survive. We want to be truly alive. Jesus tells us how this can become a reality. He said: "If anyone wishes to come after me, he must deny his very self, take up his cross, and follow in my steps. Whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and the Gospel's will save it". Jesus spoke of self-denial. We want to live, not die. Each of us is more than one self. We are many selves. Inside you and me, there is a lazy self and an industrious self, a greedy self and a generous self, a cowardly self and a courageous self, and so on. All of us are many selves. The important question is which self or selves shall have preeminence. We must lose one in order to save the other. Which will it be? If we lose our little, selfish selves for the sake of Jesus Christ, for the things which he believed in and stood for, then our bigger selves will be saved. Then our desire to be truly alive will become a reality. We will truly live and not merely survive. What will you resolve to deny or lose for the sake of Jesus Christ and the Gospels? You are assured to become more Christ-like and to be more truly alive! Participate in the special Great Fast Lenten Services in your parish enabling yourself and others to make the choices to be truly alive.

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