

ST. NICHOLAS NEWS

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ST. NICHOLAS ORTHODOX CHURCH

505 Jefferson Avenue, Scranton, Pa. 18510

Fr. Nicholas Ferencz, Ph.D., pastor
Rectory: 570-344-5917
Cell: 724-953-6046

Hall - 570-344-1522
www.stnicholasorthodoxscranton.org
nferencz35@gmail.com

June 8, 2014

PENTECOST SUNDAY

PARISH CALENDAR

Sun., June 8 PENTECOST SUNDAY

9:30 AM Divine Liturgy - pp. 213-216
After Liturgy, The Kneeling Prayers of
Pentecost.
Men's Club regular meeting scheduled.

Mon., June 9 COMMEMORATION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

9:00 AM Divine Liturgy and the Pentecost
Procession - Special Sheets.

Sat., June 14 Martyr Justin and companions

11:00 AM Mysteries of Initiation - Kathy Wang

Sun., June 15 SUNDAY OF ALL SAINTS.

Fathers' Day.

9:30 AM Divine Liturgy - pp. 217-18.
Parish Board meets

FEASTS . . . & FASTS

PENTECOST MONDAY is the feast of the Holy Spirit.
Divine Liturgy and the procession in honor of the Holy
Spirit will be at 9 AM on that day.

NO FASTING; The week of Pentecost, June 8 — June
14, we do not fast as we celebrate the great Feast of
Pentecost.

APOSTLES' FAST begins Monday, June 16. This fast is
the least strict of the four fasting periods of the year.
Traditional rules call for Strict Fast on Mondays,

Wednesdays and Fridays. The diocesan rules require
merely the usual Wednesday and Friday fast. All are
welcome to do more than the minimum.

PEOPLE STUFF

Please remember in your prayers:

Deceased: Joseph Mahrunch.

Living: Stephanie Bonk. Gloria Bracey. Mary
Chupron. Susan Danchak. Ricky, Rick & Sarah.
Michael Danchak. Fr. George Dursa. Jada Eiden.
Benjamin Groves III. Robert & Eddie Hawley.
Lorraine Kacaba. Anna Mae Kuklis. Dee Lositski.
Peggy Majcher. Mildred Orzolek. Emma Sacco. Amy
Shimo. Connie Lou Slater. Faye Snell. Marion
Sosnowski. Russell Spilka. Jeff Thomas. Ann Marie
Tigue. Fr. Donald Valasek. Gary Wassel. Julia
Worobey.

At Home: Michael Andreosky. Elizabeth Basalyga.
George & Anna Senich. Kathryn Stocoski.

Assisted Living Homes: Michael Besket. Julie Kovacs.
Julie Roberts.

Altar Vigil Lights (2): Health of Jeff Thomas by
family.

Eternal Light: Memory of Peter Farkaly by Bill &
Beverly Thomas.

Thank you and God Bless! Nicholas DiMichele, Colin
Joyce and their families wish to thank all of you who
remembered them on the occasion of the celebration

of their First Confession with your gifts, prayers and thoughtfulness. God bless you all!

Thanks to all! For your warm welcome of Fr. Frank last week. I understand that they really enjoyed their visit.

PARISH STUFF

The Tabernacle on the Main Altar is almost finished. The restorer is putting the final touches on it now. It should be done soon.

Altar Society: Important Altar Society Meeting Sunday, June 22. The agenda will be the consideration of one question: What is the Future of the Altar Society. *All* Members are asked to please attend this important meeting.

Men's Club: the regular monthly meeting is scheduled for today, Sunday, June 8.

Donation List - remains in the hall for all to add to as we seek to put together a list of all who have donated liturgical items to the parish.

YOUR GIFTS TO GOD AND HIS CHURCH

Sunday, June 1, 2014

\$ 350.00	General Collection
\$ 52.00	7 Day Lights
\$ 17.50	Holy Days
\$ 10.00	Tapers
\$ 70.50	1 st Sunday
\$ 500.00	Total Collection

FROM THE DIOCESE & OTHER STUFF

Benefit Motorcycle Ride for the benefit of Griffin Pond Animal Shelter, Humane Society (South Abington Twp., PA) will be held today, Sunday June 8th, 2014, Starting at Electric City Harley Davidson, on Route 6, at 1534 Scranton-Carbondale Highway, Scranton, PA. (By the Circle Drive-In) Registration is 10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. The Ride starts at 12:00 Noon. Approximately 57 miles and 1 1/2 hour ride. Donation is \$15.00 per Rider and \$5.00 per Passenger.

The Motorcycle Ride ends at AJ's Club Soda Restaurant, 1017 Main Street, Peckville, (turn onto Main Street, By The Mid-Valley Hospital) with a cook out. The Cook-out will start at 1:00 p.m. until 4:00

p.m. Animals will be available for adoption from the Griffin Pond Animal Shelter, open to the public. Contact Greg at 570-351-5256 and Nancy at 570-561-5560.

International Dinner featuring "France" will be prepared for you by Chef Joe Lomeo on June 12, 2014. The menu will start with a Three Onion Soup topped with Asiago crisps and a Brie Cheese and fruit platter topped with a fruit compo. Then the entree of Chicken Cordon Blue a Panko crusted Chicken stuffed with Swiss Cheese and Smoked Ham, topped with a white wine cream sauce served with roasted Garlic Potatoes and Asparagus. The dessert will be a creamy Salted Caramel Cheese Cake. Water, Soda, Coffee, and Tea are included and a cash bar is available. Seatings are at 5:30 and 6:30pm and is \$20.00 per person. Please make reservations by June 9th by calling 570-343-5151.

FIRST ANNUAL DIOCESAN YOUNG WOMEN'S RETREAT!

This summer, our Diocese is pleased to offer a new event specifically for our young women. The First Annual Young Women's Retreat will provide an opportunity for the young women of our Diocese to spend time in each other's company, have fun, pray together, and learn about how God calls each woman to serve His church with her talents and abilities.

This Retreat will take place concurrently with the Diocesan Altar Boy's Retreat. In many ways, these separate experiences are meant to parallel each other, with each focusing on the experience, vocations, and unique gifts bestowed upon the young men and women of our Church. Over the years, both the clergy and laity have expressed a great interest in creating an event tailored to our girls and young women. This year, this hope will come to fruition.

The first annual Young Women's Retreat will take place from June 29 – July 2, 2014.

The Retreat will be hosted by the Saints Peter and Paul Orthodox Church in Windber, Pennsylvania. Young women in our Diocese ages 12 – 18 are invited to attend.

Space is limited to the first thirty respondents, so please register as soon as possible. Registration deadline is June 2, 2014.

All parishes of the Diocese are urged to underwrite the

\$90.00 participation fee for their young women in recognition of all the ways that these young women serve their parishes.

DIOCESAN ALTAR BOY RETREAT 2014:

Plans are being finalized for this year's Altar Boy Retreat - "Encounter 2014". This Diocesan-wide event will take place from Sunday evening, June 29th (Registration is from 6pm till 8 p.m.) until Wednesday, July 2nd. The Retreat will once again take place at our Christ the Savior Seminary, Cathedral and Education Center in Johnstown and SS. Peter & Paul Church facilities in Windber. For our outing this year, we are planning a visit to PNC Park to see the Pittsburgh Pirates take on the Arizona Diamondbacks. This is the time and place for your faithful Altar Servers to join other Altar Boys from all over our Diocese.

The cost of this year's retreat is \$100.00. This includes everything for the three days and also includes a commemorative "Encounter 2014" T-Shirt. Please note that we are asking that all payments be made by the registration deadline. Registrations that are not paid by that time cannot be guaranteed a T-shirt or even a spot at the retreat. We hope to see everyone there!

Hard copies of the Parents' Letter and the Registration form are available in the hall. Electronic registration is once again available this year and is strongly encouraged by using the following link:

You can also find the form on the Diocesan website, ACROD.org.

Concert: A Tribute to Johnny Richards. The "Upper Valley Winds" Founder and conductor Patrick J. Marcinko Jr. (Maestro of the Choir of SS. Cyril's and Methodius Ukrainian Catholic Church Olyphant, PA) is having a concert in Scranton, PA, on Tuesday, July 22, 2014. "A TRIBUTE" to Johnny Richards-composer, arranger, genius musician. It will be held at the Scranton High School (by the Stadium), at 63 Mike Munchak Way, Scranton, PA at 7:00 p.m. Please dress appropriately. One of his (Richards) most famous composition is the "Cuban Fire Suite" Tickets are \$25.00 per adult and \$10.00 High School Student with I.D. Any questions, please contact Mr. Marcinko at 570-876-2888.

THE ASCENSION OF OUR LORD

"And Ascended into Heaven..."

An article by V. Rev. George Florovsky, D.D. Originally published in St Vladimir's Seminary Quarterly, Vol. 2 # 3, 1954. Excerpted from www.OCA.org

(Conclusion) Thus the Office for the Feast of the Ascension depicts the mystery in a poetical language. As on the day of Christ's Nativity the earth was astonished on beholding God in the flesh, so now the Heavens do tremble and cry out. "The Lord of Hosts, Who reigns over all, Who is Himself the head of all, Who is preeminent in all things, Who has reinstated creation in its former order—He is the King of Glory." And the heavenly doors are opened: "Open, Oh heavenly gates, and receive God in the flesh." It is an open allusion to Psalms 24:7-10, now prophetically interpreted. "Lift up your heads, Oh ye gates, and be lifted up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of Glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The Lord strong and mighty...." St Chrysostom says, "Now the angels have received that for which they have long waited, the archangels see that for which they have long thirsted. They have seen our nature shining on the King's throne, glistening with glory and eternal beauty.... Therefore they descend in order to see the unusual and marvelous vision: Man appearing in heaven."

The Ascension is the token of Pentecost, the sign of its coming, "The Lord has ascended to heaven and will send the Comforter to the world"

For the Holy Spirit was not yet in the world, until Jesus was glorified. And the Lord Himself told the disciples, "If I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you" (John 16:7). The gifts of the Spirit are "gifts of reconciliation," a seal of an accomplished salvation and of the ultimate reunion of the world with God. And this was accomplished only in the Ascension. "And one saw miracles follow miracles," says St John Chrysostom, "ten days prior to this our nature ascended to the King's throne, while today the Holy Ghost has descended on to our nature." The joy of the Ascension lies in the promise of the Spirit. "Thou didst give joy to Thy disciples by a promise of the Holy Spirit." The victory of Christ is wrought in us by the power of the Holy Spirit.

“On high is His body, here below with us is His Spirit. And so we have His token on high, that is His body, which He received from us, and here below we have His Spirit with us. Heaven received the Holy Body, and the earth accepted the Holy Spirit. Christ came and sent the Spirit. He ascended, and with Him our body ascended also” (St John Chrysostom). The revelation of the Holy Trinity was completed. Now the Spirit Comforter is poured forth on all flesh. “Hence comes foreknowledge of the future, understanding of mysteries, apprehension of what is hidden, distribution of good gifts, the heavenly citizenship, a place in the chorus of angels, joy without end, abiding in God, the being made like to God, and, highest of all, the being made God!” (St Basil, On the Holy Spirit, IX). Beginning with the Apostles, and through communion with them—by an unbroken succession—Grace is spread to all believers. Through renewal and glorification in the Ascended Christ, man’s nature became receptive of the spirit. “And unto the world He gives quickening forces through His human body,” says Bishop Theophanes. “He holds it completely in Himself and penetrates it with His strength, out of Himself; and He likewise draws the angels to Himself through the spirit of man, giving them space for action and thus making them blessed.” All this is done through the Church, which is “the Body of Christ;” that is, His “fullness” (Ephesians 1:23). “The Church is the fulfillment of Christ,” continues Bishop Theophanes, “perhaps in the same way as the tree is the fulfillment of the seed. That which is contained in the seed in a contracted form receives its development in the tree.”

The very existence of the Church is the fruit of the Ascension. It is in the Church that man’s nature is truly ascended to the Divine heights. “And gave Him to be Head over all things” (Ephesians 1:22). St John Chrysostom comments: “Amazing! Look again, whither He has raised the Church. As though He were lifting it up by some engine, He has raised it up to a vast height, and set it on yonder throne; for where the Head is, there is the body also. There is no interval of separation between the Head and the body; for were there a separation, then would the one no longer be a body, nor would the other any longer be a Head.” The whole race of men is to follow Christ, even in His ultimate exaltation, “to follow in His train.” Within the Church, through an acquisition of the Spirit in the

fellowship of Sacraments, the Ascension continues still, and will continue until the measure is full. “Only then shall the Head be filled up, when the body is rendered perfect, when we are knit together and united,” concludes St John Chrysostom.

The Ascension is a sign and token of the Second Coming. “This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven” (Acts 1:11).

The mystery of God’s Providence will be accomplished in the Return of the Risen Lord. In the fulfillment of time, Christ’s kingly power will be revealed and spread over the whole of faithful mankind. Christ bequeathes the Kingdom to the whole of the faithful. “And I appoint unto you a Kingdom as My Father has appointed unto me. That ye may eat and drink at My table in My Kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel” (Luke 22:29-30). Those who followed Him faithfully will sit with Him on their thrones on the day of His coming. “To him that overcomes will I grant to sit with Me in My throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with My Father in His throne” (Rev. 3:21). Salvation will be consummated in the Glory. “Conceive to yourself the throne, the royal throne, conceive the immensity of the privilege. This, at least if we chose, might more avail to startle us, yea, even than hell itself” (St John Chrysostom).

We should tremble more at the thought of that abundant Glory which is appointed unto the redeemed, than at the thought of the eternal darkness. “Think near Whom Thy Head is seated....” Or rather, Who is the Head. In very truth, “wondrous and terrible is Thy divine ascension from the mountain, O Giver of Life.” A terrible and wondrous height is the King’s throne. In face of this height all flesh stands silent, in awe and trembling. “He has Himself descended to the lowest depths of humiliation, and raised up man to the height of exaltation.”

What then should we do? “If thou art the body of Christ, bear the Cross, for He bore it” (St John Chrysostom).

“With the power of Thy Cross, Oh Christ, establish my thoughts, so that I may sing and glorify Thy saving Ascension.”