

St. Mary's of Parma, OH Monthly Newsletter

A PARISH OF THE WESTERN DIOCESE OF THE POLISH NATIONAL CATHOLIC CHURCH

June 2018

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Men's Retreat

The first National YMSofR-sponsored Men's Spiritual Retreat was held at the Bishop Hodur Retreat & Recreation Center on the grounds of Spojnia Farm from the evening of May 17-Noon May 19.

The Retreat was set up to fulfill the goals of Bishop Hodur in establishing the Young Men's Society of the Resurrection (YMSofR) some 100+ years ago: To unite the men of the PNCC in the endeavor of the perfection of a Christian life.

At our last Biennial Convention at All Saints Parish in Sterling Heights, MI in 2017, the National YMSofR approved a sub-committee to be formed to put together a Retreat. This was in response to the call of sp. Rev. Raymond Drada, who became worried that the YMSofR in the PNCC had fall-



en away from the call of Bishop Hodur and lost the spirit of devotion to things spiritual, not just necessarily the physical upkeep of the parish.

The small group of men began to arrive Thursday afternoon, the 17th. It was a mild late-spring evening – sweatshirt-and-jeans weather. We ate a restaurant-quality meal of baked ziti and salad. The ziti was prepared by Mama Kaz, Kurs cook extraordinaire. It was full of meat, cheeses...everyone had seconds, some thirds... maybe one fourth? Dessert for the Retreat came from Cwikla's bakery.

Our Retreat began in earnest with a couple of ice-breakers. As would be the theme of the Retreat, we had an hour penciled in,



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sons why, as well as what distractions keep our personal spirituality hidden. Cleric Jim Ploskonka then introduced our "Penance Thing", the introspective exercise that asked us to look at our life highs and lows and our spiritual highs and lows...and then place them on a timeline to see how they match up (hint: they do). This exercise would be developed over the few days in retreat.

Our evening closed with prayer and the exposition of the Most Blessed Sacrament. Eucharistic Adoration was a focus of our Retreat, as we ended up spending hours before the Present Christ. A chapel for adoration was set up in one of the wings where no one was staying – the Sacrament would be exposed until we concluded Friday evening prayer.

Day two, our only full day, began with Morning Prayer. The liturgies were pre-



pared by Rev. Carmen Bolock, chaplain of the National YMSofR. A tremendous breakfast was served by Nick Kazinetz and Andrew Humphreys (they prepared all meals), consisting of eggs, bacon, toast, coffee, juice, pastry, potatoes, and French toast sticks. Our morning session was led by Fr. Dennis Ruda of All Saints in Johnson City, NY. He spoke of the need for spiritual revival in our parishes, the decisions that have led to difficult

but the Holy Spirit allowed the time to be doubled. Led by Andrew Humphreys, we discussed our favorite bible verses, the rea-

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Fr. Jason's Article (Cont)

times at parishes, and the need for prayer.

Prime Bishop Anthony Mikovsky joined us shortly after and led the group on a discussion that touched on the feminization of the church. He spoke to how it was a long term thing, not necessarily negative, but something that could be viewed as detrimental to a layman's view of church. His talk centered on male roles in the church and past and future developments as well.

After a lunch of cold cuts, salad, and fresh bread and rolls, we took a little break from the schedule before reconvening mid-afternoon for the Spiritual Walk through Spojnia Farm. Led by Fr. Jason Soltysiak from St. Mary's in Parma, OH, it was 12 stops around Spojnia Farm with meditations, scripture quotes, historical accounts of the areas of the Farm, and Bible look-ups. The walk through the property took about 3 hours, with plenty of discussion on the topics, sites, and scripture.

Having worked up quite an appetite, we would sit down to a feast of homemade pizza and wing bites. We recounted the day thus far while enjoying some manly food and noted how we made sure to go after the lost sheep left behind in the Manor. After dinner, we had an hour set aside for Eucharistic Adoration. We sat in silence, we had books available, we sang hymns, prayed from prayer books...and before we knew it, the hour was up. The setting and the camaraderie allowed the time to truly fly by be-

fore the Sacrament.

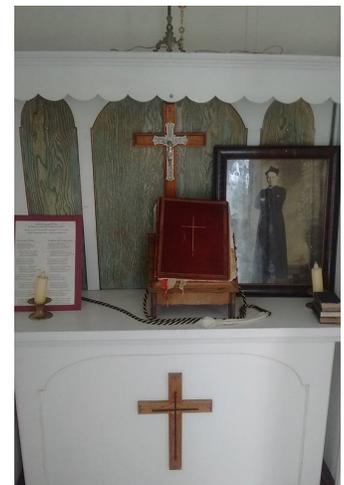
After adoration, Father Jason led a bible study on the Book of Jonah. His goal was to delve into an entire book of the bible that was centered on a very flawed man, just like everyone else. We retired around the bonfire... sort of...and made it to bed much earlier than the previous night.

The next morning began with a light breakfast of pastry and coffee. We then had Cleric Ploskonka close his thoughts and direction on the "Penance Thing". Our preparation in that, as well as our study, our togetherness, and our adoration of the Most Blessed Sacrament led us to the culmination of the Retreat – the Celebration of Holy Mass, concelebrated by Prime Bishop Mikovsky and Bishop Stanley Bilinski of the Western Diocese.

Our Retreat ended with lunch – all the leftover delicious food. Bishop Bilinski led us in a recounting of the Retreat, as we offered our fixes, our plans to grow, the ability to make this an annual event, and how to bring the spirituality we enjoyed on retreat back to our personal lives and in the lives of our parish. It's hard!

Our retreat planning committee was led by Fr. Jason Soltysiak and consisted of Fr. Carmen Bolock (St. Mary's, Duryea, PA), Cleric Jim Ploskonka (St. Mary's, Parma, OH) Andrew Humphreys (St. Adalbert's, Dickson City, PA), and Ty Menna (Resurrection, Temperance MI). Many thanks to all who attended and supported us. We look forward one day to doing this again.

Fr. Jason



Mother's Day Brunch

Branch #29 of the YMSofR and the men of the parish sponsored the annual Mothers' Day Brunch at St. Mary's on May 13.

All women were honored with carnations as they exited each Holy Mass. They were then honored at Brunch

with prayer and with some fine delicacies, appetizers, and refreshments.

Unfortunately, the only picture we have is what everything looked like *before* it was served...it was great!



Various Announcements

May Devotions

May Devotions concluded this past Wednesday, May 30th. Thank you to all who participated and honored our patroness Mary through veneration and prayer.

Polish Parade

Thank you to all who participated in this year's Polish Constitution Day parade. A write-up and pictures are featured in this newsletter.

Flowers

Towards the end of last summer, Father Jason began asking parishioners to bring in flowers from their home gardens to beautify the church. The call goes out again – as our Easter Lilies have met their day, the desire for fresh flowers remains. If you would like to bring in flowers to put on the main altar for a Sunday, please arrange with Fr. Jason so he can make sure it is acknowledged. We would love to schedule as many Sundays as possible!

Honor a Father

Acknowledge or remember our Fathers, lay or clergy, for their dedication to us and at the same time provide some much needed support to the PNCC Clergy Pension Fund. Send a minimum donation of \$25 to the Clergy Pension Fund Committee, c/o

Western Diocese Chancery,
920 N. Northwest Hwy,
Park Ridge, IL 60068, and
include your name and the
name of the Father you wish to honor.

Bible Study

A new section of Bible Study has begun—we are reading "I am a Church Member" by Thom S. Rainer and using the accompanying scripture—Keep an eye on the parish bulletin (always available on our parish website) for dates and times.

Memorial Day

Thank you to all who attended a beautiful (and warm) Memorial Day service at Sacred Heart Cemetery. We were honored by the presence of our veterans, the invitation to dine with them, and, most importantly, God's gift of freedom, fought for and defended.

Convo 2018

Convo 2018 is being hosted by the Central Diocese July 23-27 and will be held this year at the University of Scranton, just blocks away from the first parish of the PNCC, St. Stanislaus. Info is posted on the bulletin board. There is also a raffle to help support the entirety of the event – please stop by the Board Room to purchase a ticket.

Sacred Vocations

June is Sacred Vocations month. This is the time when we must pray for and encourage young (and not so young) men to the priesthood. Start small – try to get your grandson to become an altar server. But Vocations go farther than that. Ask your daughter if she would like to be a lector, or ask your niece if she would like to be an altar server. The more who serve the Lord, the better.

Semi-Annual Meeting

A semi-annual meeting is scheduled for Sunday, June 24th after the 9am Mass. There will be no second Mass this day. The purpose is to review issues halfway through the year, rather than to do everything at once at the Annual Meeting. Reports from parish organizations will not be required.

PolishFest 2018

The dates have been set – the PolishFest will take place Friday-Sunday, September 7-9. If possible, please allow your schedule to accommodate volunteering at this event.

Polish Constitution Day Parade

St. Mary's once again participated in the annual Polish Constitution Day parade, held in Parma on the first Sunday after Polish Constitution Day (May 3).

We had a nice turnout of parishioners and friends who walked with us. We enjoyed the participation of 2 surprise out-of-town walkers, Rose and Boots, along with our parish's 3 babies, the RBM (Roland, Brady, Max), and, of course, 5 parish poochies. We made sure to give out some parish information as well to the kids, along with their sought-after candy.

After the parade, Fr. Jason was called upon to do the invocation for the festivities. The Polish National Alliance of Cleveland help support and put on the program. A delicious selection of vendors and churches provided food, cold drinks, and games

for revelers to enjoy.

Thank you to all who walked or drove a vehicle—we were happy to have "The Tank", thanks to parishioner Jack Amburgey. Hope everyone comes back to walk next year!



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Memorial Day Weekend

Memorial Day weekend at St. Mary's means a two-fold celebration—a remembrance to conclude each Sunday Holy Mass as well as services at the cemetery.

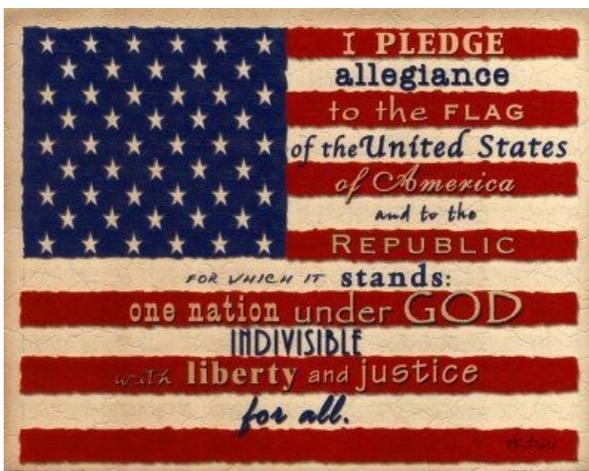
We closed each Sunday morning Mass on May 27 with prayers at St. Joseph's Altar, set before a wreath donated to the parish by the Polish Legion of American Vets (PLAV) Post 164 out of Warren, OH. We remembered the lives lost from our par-

ish, our Seniorate, our family members and friends.

On Monday, we gathered at Sacred Heart of Jesus Cemetery at 10am, where parishioners and friends were joined by PLAV Post 30 out of the Tremont section of Cleveland, nearby the former home of Sacred Heart PNCC on W. 14th St.

Services were conducted by Fr. Jason, assisted by Fr. Greg Gronn, Cleric

Ploskonka, and Chuck Repede. At the conclusion of the religious service, the 21 gun salute was performed, as well as the playing of Taps. All were invited back to Post 30 for a bite to eat, and the graves of all departed veterans were blessed by the clergy.



PNCC Future Directions Update

June 1, 2018

Dear Bishops, Very Rev. and Rev. Fathers, Deacons and Faithful of our Holy Church,
A New Springtime for Sacred Vocations is upon us. A special thanks to Rev. Dr. Scott J Lill for preparing the message this month.

"...and some seed fell on good soil, and when it grew, it produced fruit a hundred-fold." Luke 8:8

As we continue to journey further into the Polish National Catholic Year of the Family, we are now passing through the gateway into summer by entering the month of June. This is the time when school typically lets out, when we honor our fathers living and deceased and, for those of us who have braved the rigors of winter, we finally get to venture outside more often and absorb the warmth of the sunshine. While we must now grudgingly add lawn care to our seemingly insurmountable task lists, in exchange we have the opportunity to contemplate the beauty of God's Creation which has suddenly burst into vibrant life. Many of us plant gardens with a great variety of vegetables and colorful flowers in the hopeful anticipation of watching them grow toward a bountiful harvest in the months to come. June is the month when we get our hands dirty and willingly embrace some extra labor because we are focused on the promise that, with God's blessing, it will produce fruit in the days to come.

June is also the month set aside by the Church to make special efforts with regard to praying for and promoting vocations to the ordained ministry. It is a most appropriate time to do so because just as we sow seeds in the soil in hopes of a great yield in the days to come, so do we pray that the spiritual seeds of a call to the priesthood or diaconate planted within the hearts of those men chosen by the Holy Spirit may come to abundant fruition in the form of their joyful responses.

However, we must honestly admit that for some time the abundance of fresh growth in our backyard patches has not been mirrored within the Church as regards the yield of men coming forward to prepare for ordination; we haven't exactly been producing bumper crops of ordinations, have we? Why? Well, perhaps it's the condition of the soil. And what exactly is this soil? It is nothing less than the inner life of the Church as it is expressed every day through the individual lives of its members.

As I have prayerfully reflected on the exalted role of the family in God's plan within the Church, I have honestly, but prayerfully and compassionately, considered the lives of many families that I know and serve in different contexts, both personal and pastoral, and have come to more clearly see the values and principles which now commonly undergird their lives. Quite honestly, the collective lives of many families now revolve around a great variety of things - some of them admittedly wholesome and even admirable - but none of which are God. As a result, I have come to the conclusion that, despite clergy shortages across denominational lines, we are not actually in the midst of a "vocation crisis." Rather, we face a discipleship crisis, one of the spoiled fruits of which is a shortage of assenting responses to God's call to the ordained ministry. It seems that perhaps the soil that is the life of the Church has become infertile, even contaminated and therefore much in need of our collective attention and labor.

In a sense, we have already implicitly recognized this at the last General Synod when we began to actively consider and address the future direction in which we shall walk together on this beautiful journey toward God's Kingdom. But essential questions remain: are we still consistently faithful to the essential mission of Christ's Church as it was understood and articulated by the organizing members of the Polish National Catholic Church, under the inspired leadership of Bishop Hodur? Are we intently focused on being the means by which "other Christs" are formed for the purposes of sanctifying and transforming the world, or have we become too enamored with lesser matters? How seriously do we take the promises that we made in Holy Baptism; do we fruitfully use the gifts of the Holy Spirit bestowed in Confirmation to act as witnesses to Christ crucified and risen from the dead; and do we draw upon the strength of the Eucharistic Lord to go forth as lights for a world still much in darkness? Do we really under-



PNCC Future Directions Update (continued)

stand that being a Polish National Catholic is our very way of life and not just what we do for an hour each weekend...or whenever we can fit Church in?

We must all be realistic and clear, nonetheless: it will take time and real effort to refresh the soil of the Church. First, we must readily admit that it needs to be recharged... and be ready to face down any opposition, which insists that it is fine as it is. Then, foundational

values must be clarified and articulated through a process of honest, intense, spiritual introspection, before actions can ever really change. To put it another way, the ground must be cleared and thoroughly re-tilled before enduring fruit in any form, including vocations, can be born. This re-tilling can be painful, as the rocks of outdated ways of thinking and the stones of no longer useful forms of action are diligently removed, as deep-seated worldliness and ecclesial self-centeredness is uprooted, and as inordinate attachments to any endeavor to which we are more dedicated than the proclamation of the Gospel - regardless of the exalted place they may hold within our collective customs - are broken. Though admittedly difficult and uncomfortable, with the assistance of God's indispensable grace and his own patience, compassion and love for each other within our hearts, it can be done.

In truth, if we really want to address the apparent lack of responses to God's ongoing call to men to serve in the Church as priests and deacons, the questions above are *the questions* we must all continually ask ourselves. That's where it must start - within our own hearts, which are so much in need of ongoing conversion and a constantly renewed commitment to Jesus our Lord. From there, it grows within our families and then out into the parishes, moving up into the dioceses and, finally, spreading to the whole Church, constituted anew by re-energized disciples of the Lord who love Him above all and others as themselves, who explicitly recognize the Gospel as the foundation of their very existence and who embrace their identity as Polish National Catholics and live it to the fullest every day.

Such a Church would indeed be a truly fertile soil, producing first a superabundance of love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control, which are the ever-sweet fruits of the Holy Spirit, blossoming into its truest self, and becoming, as it were, a great orchard of authentic discipleship. This renewed soil, so deeply rich in God's grace and reinvigorated by a fresh outpouring of the Paraclete, would then *easily* nourish the seeds of the vocations to the ordained ministry that the Divine Sower most certainly continues to plant within those men whom He is calling and help produce an abundant harvest of servant leadership in the ordained ministry.

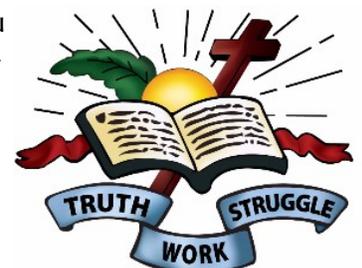
In the end, to promote vocations to the priesthood and diaconate, we must return to the fundamentals of the faith, refocusing on our common call to holiness and collective mission of service. This simply means that each of us must start with the clearing and re-tilling of the soil of our hearts, by waking up every day and asking, "what must I do to be more like Jesus today?" and then living accordingly. This Sacred Vocations month seems like a perfect time for all of us to start. After all, it's gardening season already, right?

Please keep this church-wide undertaking in your daily prayers – asking God to bless this work and allow it to bear fruit for the building of His Kingdom through our Holy Church.

We are also appealing to all our parishes to please keep in your prayers our upcoming Holy Synod now just five months away. In preparation for our Holy Synod we are asking for you to share with our committee pictures and testimonials from successes that you have experienced as you implemented the future direction over these past four years. Please email them to FutureDirection@pncc.org

PNCC Supreme Council Future Direction Committee

Most Rev. Anthony A. Mikovsky, *Prime Bishop*—Very Rev. Robert M. Nemkovich Jr., *Chairman*



June Days of Note



- 2nd – Jordan Michalczyk
- 2nd – Nicole Michalczyk
- 6th – Bridgette Dotson
- 10th – Megan Knapp
- 12th – Madi Ference
- 13th – Gerald Beres
- 27th – June Zaun
- 27th – Jeanette Ols



- 18th – Mitch and Sarah Ploskonka
- 25th – Fr. Jason & Natalie Soltysiak
- 27th – Bruce & Barbara Bogzevitz
- 28th – Adolph Jr. & Teresa Kasperczyk



The 3 Enemies

THE FLESH

Sweet, thou art pale.
"More pale to see,
Christ hung upon the cruel tree
And bore His Father's wrath for me.

Sweet, thou art sad.
Beneath a rod
More heavy, Christ for my sake trod
The winepress of the wrath of God.

Sweet, thou art weary.
"Not so Christ:
Whose mighty love of me suffic'd

For Strength, Salvation, Eucharist.

Sweet, thou art footsore.
If I bleed,
His feet have bled; yea in my need
His Heart once bled for mine indeed.

THE WORLD

Sweet, thou art young.
So He was young
Who for my sake in silence hung
Upon the Cross with Passion wrung.

Look, thou art fair.
He was more fair
Than men, Who deign'd for me to wear
A visage marr'd beyond compare.

And thou hast riches.
Daily bread:
All else is His: Who, living, dead,
For me lack'd where to lay His Head.

And life is sweet.
It was not so
To Him, Whose Cup did overflow
With mine unutterable woe.

THE DEVIL

Thou drinkest deep.
When Christ would sup
He drain'd the dregs from out my cup:
So how should I be lifted up?

Thou shalt win Glory.
In the skies,
Lord Jesus, cover up mine eyes
Lest they should look on vanities.

Thou shalt have Knowledge.
Helpless dust!
In Thee, O Lord, I put my trust:
Answer Thou for me, Wise and Just.

"And Might.
"Get thee behind me.
Lord,
Who hast redeem'd and not abhorr'd
My soul, oh keep it by Thy Word.

- Christina Rossetti -

Our Prayer List

Please pray for these St. Mary's parishioners:

- | | |
|-----------------------|------------------------|
| Bill & Pat Glatzer | Barbara Baranowski |
| Bill & Joan Kastak | Anna Dawidziuk |
| Craig Atherton | John Spilka |
| Johanna Markiewicz | Mary Ann Loschelder |
| Ralph & June Zaun | Len Pryer |
| Marty Bengela | Gerald Beres |
| Polly Gajda | Frank & Millie Dominik |
| Kathleen Beres | Louise Cygan |
| Helen Budney | Bruno Tracy |
| Chester & Ann Warzala | Tom Petrie |
| Gail Perz | Amy Dreger |
| Halina Dreger | Patti Dotson |
| Tom Putynski | |

Please pray for our family and friends:

- | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Wanda Clark | Beth Chihill |
| Michael Cosevin | Helen Cummings |
| Laina Dachtal | Sharon Seitz |
| Jay Grabowsky | Pam Chesar |
| Cecelia Hall | Caroline Kunes |
| Mark & Kim Andreas | Thomas Lill |
| John & Anne Nemetz | Bea Miskow |
| Rose Neyman | Carol Boesch |
| Joanie True | Daniel Rinella |
| Fr. Tom Sheha | Fr. Sr. Gus Sicard |
| Gracie Pijor | Ben Soltesy |
| Pam Tropiano | Linda Vect |
| Dennis and Sue Vect | Marcus Vaughn, Jr. |
| Bryson Dzurhoff | Fr. Sr. Joseph Soltysiak |
| Cherise Pacanovsky | Jane Hunter |
| Dennis Thome | The Finnie Family |
| Carlene Fliss | Jim Fliss Jr. |
| Duda Family | Bill Hinton |
| Nan Cramer | Bp. Stanley Bilinski |
| Bp. John Mack | David Vaden |
| Bp. John Swantek | Jeannie Bartko Muran |
| Mary Cawley | Edna Samelson |
| Kim Blaha | Geri S. |
| Wanda Heffner | Larry Bernacki |
| Donna Kidd | Paulette Lilli |
| Muffie B. | Nancy Jablonowski |
| Marilyn Girard | Courtney Austin |
| Stephanie Milla | Rich Dombrowski |
| Shannon Alberino | Jayden Pieciak |
| Jeremy Steinbrick | Katie Stallbaum |
| Marcia Klein | Julia Badarzynski |
| George & Linda Makovicka | Mike Sikut |

Those in nursing homes or assisted living:

WE ALSO REMEMBER
ALL ACTIVE & RETIRED CLERGY
ALL SERVICE MEN AND WOMEN
Bless them, O Lord.

Visit us online at
www.stmaryspncc.org