



EPARCHIAL NEWSLETTER

Byzantine Catholic Eparchy of Van Nuys

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Christ is Risen! Indeed He is Risen!

Vol. XIV, No. II April - May, 2005

Pope John Paul II

May 18, 1920 - April 2, 2005

“Totus Tuus”

Pascha, 2005 Christ is Risen!

My beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Thousands of faithful began to gather on Friday evening, April 1 in Saint Peter's Square in Rome. The faithful stood vigil chanting prayers and singing hymns to the Mother of God in sight of the window where the Holy Father lay suffering. Our Holy Father, Pope John Paul II reposed peacefully in the Lord on Saturday, April 2, 2005 at 9:37 pm. We have lost a powerful spiritual leader of our Church.

Pope John Paul II, 264th Bishop of Rome, was elected on October 16, 1978. He was the first non-Italian pope in 455 years and the first Slavic pope ever. He was interested and helpful to the Eastern Churches. His motto, “Totus Tuus (Always Yours),” was indicative of his spirit and his selfless giving even to the last moments of his life here on this earth.

I had the opportunity to visit with Pope John Paul II in Rome on two separate occasions during the past two years for the Ad Limina visit in September of 2004 and the New Bishops' Symposium in September of 2003.

Through his many writings, we are reminded of how impressed he has been since his youth by Jesus saying to



Bishop William met with the Holy Father at Castel Gandolfo during the quinquennial Ad Limina visit to Rome in September 2004.

his disciples: “Fear not, little flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.” (Luke 12:32). “He did not prepare them for easy success,” writes John Paul II.

The Gospel is not a promise of easy success. Rather, we are reminded through the Holy Resurrection of our Lord of that which is to come. Now, with the passing of the Holy Father, we look with hope to the future. We mourn the great loss of a great Pope.

We continue to remember our Holy Father in prayer.

*May God grant to his servant
+John Paul Eternal Memory and Blessed
Repose! Christ is Risen!*

+William C Skurla

Most Reverend William C. Skurla, D.D.
Bishop of the Eparchy of Van Nuys



PARISH	PASTOR	FAMILIES	\$ GOAL	\$ RECD <i>as of 4/1/05</i>
Albuquerque, NM	Our Lady of Perpetual Help Rev. Zugger	76	\$ 15,200	\$ 6,965
Anaheim, CA	Church of the Annunciation Rev. Msgr. Vida	95	\$ 19,000	\$ 4,330
Anchorage, AK	St. Nicholas of Myra Rt. Rev. Izer	43	\$ 8,600	
Denver, CO	Holy Protection Rt. Rev. Izzo	29	\$ 5,800	
Fontana, CA	St. Nicholas of Myra Rev. Hutsko	33	\$ 6,600	\$ 2,000
Gilbert, AZ	St. Thomas the Apostle Rev. Acquaro	52	\$ 10,400	\$ 800
Las Vegas, NV	Our Lady of Wisdom Rt. Rev. Vivona	49	\$ 9,800	\$ 9,200
Las Vegas, NV	St. Gabriel the Archangel Rev. Daigle	91	\$ 18,200	\$ 7,675
Los Gatos, CA	St. Basil the Great Rev. Hernandez	22	\$ 4,400	
Olympia, WA	St. George Rev. Perry	28	\$ 5,600	
Phoenix, AZ	St. Stephen Pro-Cathedral Rt. Rev. Washko	130	\$ 26,000	\$ 15,100
Portland, OR	St. Irene Rev. Burnette	28	\$ 5,600	\$ 200
Sacramento, CA	St. Philip the Apostle Rev. Hernandez	20	\$ 4,000	\$ 1,400
San Diego, CA	Holy Angels Rev. Pipta	67	\$ 13,400	\$ 4,200
San Luis Obispo, CA	St. Anne Rev. Idranyi	36	\$ 7,200	\$ 4,100
Seattle, WA	St. John Chrysostom Rt. Rev. Stanichar	86	\$ 17,200	\$ 6,900
Sherman Oaks, CA	St. Mary Cathedral Very Rev. Rybarczyk	99	\$ 19,800	\$ 5,157
Spokane, WA	SS. Cyril & Methodius Rev. O'Brien	31	\$ 6,200	
Tucson, AZ	St. Melany Rev. Rankin	47	\$ 9,400	\$ 5,965
TOTAL:	19 Parishes	1,062	\$ 212,400	\$ 73,992

Deacon Students' Retreat

The Deacon Students of the Eparchy, accompanied by their wives, gathered for their yearly retreat at the Franciscan Renewal Center in Scottsdale, Arizona from March 4-6. The weekend was spent in prayer, conferences, and quiet reflection. Spiritual Direction, the theme for the retreat, is the guide to our relationship with God and each other for growth in Holiness/wholeness and communion with God. Very Reverend Archpriest John Petro, Rector of Saints Cyril and Methodius Seminary in Pittsburgh was the Retreat Director.

“Spiritual Direction,” says Fr. John, “helps us in interpreting our experiences and finding where God is in that experience. The director helps us see that God is present and that He holds our life together. The primary spiritual director is Jesus Christ.”

The retreat ended on Sunday with the Divine Liturgy at Stephen Pro-Cathedral. The *ByzanTeens* hosted a breakfast for the retreatants and all the faithful gathered.



Front Row (Left to Right): James and Josie Danovich, Mark Brown, Kelly and Michael Mandelas, John Bradley, Brian and Janet Escobedo; Second Row: Michael Hanafin, Rev. Robert Pipta, Rt. Rev. Stephen G. Washko, Very Rev. John Petro, Deacon John Montalvo, Donna and Michael Sullivan.

Reverend Robert Pipta is Vocation Director for the Eparchy of Van Nuys. If you have a desire to serve the Church and would like to learn more about the diaconate, priesthood or religious life, call the Vocation Office: (858) 277-2511.

THE RESURRECTION OF OUR LORD

CHRIST IS RISEN!

INDEED HE IS RISEN

By Rev. Fr. Julian Anthony, S.T.D.

For Byzantine Catholics the Resurrection of Jesus Christ is the source and summit of their spiritual life. On Easter Sunday the church resounds with the cry of the priest: "Christos Voskrese!" The people respond with joy and enthusiasm: "Voistinnu Voskrese!"

Resurrection of Jesus

The earliest text on the Resurrection of Christ is 1 Cor. 15: 3-8. By quoting a number of witnesses, St. Paul shows that the resurrection is a historical fact and he concludes the list with his own eyewitness. Paul's conversion and his life after the Damascus experience are an undeniable proof of this historical event.

St. Paul brings out forcefully in this text that the resurrection is not only a historical event that took place about two thousand years ago, but much more importantly that the risen Christ is alive today among us.

Writing in Greek, he has used the verbs *egegetai* ('He has been raised'), a perfect passive that contrasts with *apethanen ...kai etaphe* ('He died ... and was buried'), both verbs are in the aorist tense. (The aorist tense is one of the past tenses of Church Slavonic. It indicates simple action in the past without any implication of duration or completeness.) In this way Paul emphasizes that Christ died, but is not dead; He was buried, but He is not in the grave; He was raised and He is alive now.

To deny the resurrection of Jesus amounts, in Paul's eyes, to denying the Christian faith itself. (1. Cor. 15: 14) Christianity stands or falls with the reality of Jesus' resurrection from the dead. In a profound sense, Christianity without the resurrection is not only Christianity minus its final chapter; it is no Christianity at all.

The whole aim of Paul and the early Church was not to tell people about Jesus Christ, but to introduce them to Jesus Christ, and His presence and His power. In the early days - as it should be now—Christianity was not an argument about a dead person, however great; it was an encounter with a living presence.

There was one mistake into which the early Church was never in any danger of falling. In those early days men



never thought of Jesus Christ as a figure in a book. They never thought of Him as someone who had lived, and died, and whose story was told and passed down in history, as the story of someone who had lived and whose life had ended. They did not think of Him as someone who had been but as someone who is. They did not think of Jesus Christ as someone whose teaching must be discussed and debated and argued about; they thought of Him as someone whose presence could be enjoyed and whose constant fellowship could be experienced. Their faith was not founded on a book; but their faith was founded on a person.

The spirit of the first age of Christianity with its unaffected joy in the Resurrection of the Lord is still

RESURRECTION continued on page 4

RESURRECTION *continued from page 3*

enshrined in the Byzantine liturgical services. In other words, the Byzantine Tradition has retained a unique loyalty to the Fathers of the Eastern Church whose vital spirit still animates Eastern piety.

For Byzantine Catholics, as St. Germanus of Constantinople notes, even his humble parish church is “Heaven on earth, the place where the God of heaven dwells and moves;” where man can “lay aside all earthly care,” and the liturgy enjoins them, to “welcome the King of the Universe.” It is the heavenly sanctuary, “where men and women, according to their capacity and desire, are caught up into the worship of the redeemed cosmos; where dogmas are no barren abstraction but hymns of exulting praise.”

To participate in the holy mysteries becomes a fearsome service; holy objects had to be hidden—viewed from far-away. Gradually the simple and direct liturgical action of the early Church became an object of contemplation, an awesome vision, full of mystery, before which man prostrates himself in reverential fear.

The heavenly liturgy

In the Latin Church, the Eucharistic celebration is seen more as a means of preparing the militant Christian to “fight the good fight” through the grace-giving mediation of the Incarnate Word. Whereas, the Byzantine Catholic looks to the liturgical community’s transfiguring participation in the eternally triumphant God-man’s Passover from death to life as a foreshadowing of the final divinization of God’s people in the Kingdom to come.

The spirit is not one of loving compassion for the suffering mediator expiating our sins on the cross, but of glorifying adoration of the Heavenly Ruler of all in the renewal of His triumph over death.

Byzantine spirituality, therefore, does not merely include a different way of saying Mass. It is a “special patrimony,” with its own feasts and fasts, saints and shrines. It is devotion to the Mother of God with filial love, devotion to saints without novenas, devotion to the Eucharist without Exposition or Benediction, the observance of Lent without the Stations of the Cross. And what is more important, it is another “genius and temperament.”

In the Byzantine liturgy, the exuberance of Antioch and Jerusalem is tempered by the balance and moderation of Byzantine civilization. It is a liturgy of profound adoration, with a deep sense of mystery; a liturgy which turns the pomp of the imperial court ceremonial into a service of the Heavenly King.

Essence of Byzantine Christianity

The essence of Byzantine Christianity cannot be reduced to certain aspects of its ceremony and chant, which are the product of time.

Life in the church is spoken of in terms of glory, light, vision, union, and transfiguration.

A Byzantine Catholic’s life in Christ is a progressive transfiguration into the likeness of God—transformation of man into the image of God.

For him the liturgy is not one of various spiritual duties; it is the central fact of the Christian life, the supreme expression of his life in God. The purpose of God’s saving revelation is to render man capable of the life of God, and the liturgy is the privileged ground of this encounter. It is the place of theophany, where man is introduced into the divine life by participating in the mystery of redemption.

As we celebrate the feast of feasts, let us add light where there is darkness; love where there is hate; hope where there is despair; a cup of water where there is thirst and a piece of bread where there is hunger. The greatest hunger of our people, as Mother Teresa said, is hunger for LOVE.



2005 EPARCHIAL CALENDAR

March 12	Lenten Day of Recollection and Hierarchical Divine Liturgy Blessing of Iconostasis: Cathedral of Saint Mary, Sherman Oaks, CA
March 25	Annunciation of the Mother of God/Great and Holy Friday
March 27	PASCHA: Holy Resurrection of Our Lord
April 2	Falling Asleep in the Lord, our Holy Father Pope John Paul II
April 7	Office of Christian Burial for our Holy Father Pope John Paul II Saint Stephen Pro-Cathedral, Phoenix, AZ, 7 PM
April 10, 17, 24	"Called by Name" Vocation Program
April 11-13	Intereparchial Liturgical Commission Meeting: Pittsburgh, PA
April 19	Intereparchial Youth Commission Meeting: Emmitsburg, MD
April 22-24	Sisters of Saint Basil sponsor LifeQuest: "Holiness is Wholeness" Discernment Weekend for Young Women (ages 18-40) Contact: Sr. Jean Marie (724) 438-8644. Saint Mary's Byzantine Catholic Convent, Wilkes Barre, PA.
May 10	Seminary Advisory Board Meeting, SS Cyril & Methodius Seminary, Pittsburgh, PA
May 11	Intereparchial Vocation Directors Meeting, Pittsburgh, PA
May 23-26	Eparchy of Van Nuys Clergy Days, Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church, Albuquerque, NM
June 16-18	United States Conference of Catholic Bishops Meeting, Chicago, IL



Called by Name

"Christ, who commanded prayer for the laborers in the harvest, has also personally called those laborers... but usually He calls by means of us and our words. So, do not be afraid to call. Go among your young people. The hearts of many young people, and not so young people, are ready to listen to you. Many of them are looking for something to live for; they are waiting to discover a worthwhile mission, to devote their lives to it. Christ has attuned them to His call and yours. We must call. The Lord will do the rest, He who offers each individual his or her special gift, according to the grace that has been given to that person."

- Pope John Paul II

Called by Name is a unique vocation awareness program designed to recognize potential church vocations to the priesthood, diaconate, religious and monastic life. It attempts to inform Byzantine Catholics about qualities we are looking for in potential candidates for service in the Church. It gives the local Church the opportunity to make the invitation. This program enables those individuals invited to explore vocation possibilities in a supportive and prayerful setting.

Laity and clergy alike are asked to suggest names of men and women they know who have exhibited qualities that indicate they might have a church vocation. The program will continue in the parishes through April 24.

With God's grace, the prayers and help of the people we will find that there are many women and men just waiting to be... Called by Name.

Day of Recollection in Sacramento

On March 5 parishioners enjoyed a day of prayer and reflection on the Fathers and Mothers of the Desert. The day began with a Moleben to our Lord Jesus. Father Anthony Hernandez gave a talk reflecting on the ascetics of the Desert and reviewed the lives of Saint Mary of Egypt, Moses the Ethiopian, Arsenios, and Mary the niece of Abba Abraham. He remarked that the ascetics of the desert are models of Christian conversion and charity towards others. Although greatly separated in time, we can still recognize and imitate their practical wisdom and humility. After lunch, an All Souls Panachida was celebrated. The participants were given booklets with various sayings of the Desert Fathers and Mothers. After reflecting on the sayings, participants were encouraged to share their impressions. The discussion was interesting and edifying and all felt rewarded for the experience.

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Christ is Risen!
Indeed He is Risen!

Pope John Paul II
1920 - 2005



“It is not enough to discover Christ--
you must bring Him to others!”

+JP II

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- ✦ *Bishop's Message*
- ✦ *"The Resurrection of Our Lord"*
by Rev. Fr. Julian Anthony, S.T.D.
- ✦ *"Called by Name"*
- ✦ *Bishop's Appeal Progress Report*

2005 EPARCHIAL YOUTH ACTIVITIES

ALIVE IN CHRIST: July 14-17, 2005 An ascetical boot camp for Byzantine Catholic young men (ages 8-17) in Upper Nutria, NM. Fee: \$70.00.

EPARCHIAL BYZANTEEN YOUTH RALLY:
August 4-7, 2005 *"O Lord, I Love the Beauty of your House!"* Seattle, WA. Fee: \$175.00 for WA/OR residents/
\$125.00 for all others by May 30, 2005.

WORLD YOUTH DAY 2005: August 16-23, 2005 Young Adults (ages 18-35) in Cologne, Germany.