

St. Mary's of Parma, OH Monthly Newsletter

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

May 2024

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Let us Stand!!!

When I was in seminary in the “mid-aughts”, I had a wonderful professor of Religion & Science in Rev. Dr. Placek. An accomplished tenured college educator, he took on Christ’s call to the priesthood when most people would retire.

His teaching style was professional, yet engaging...but his real talent was reading the room. After gauging the work, responses, and faces of us seminarians towards the end of his lesson, he would ask what else we had going on that day...and off we were to get coney dogs and fries, visit a Chinese buffet, or once during Paschaltide (the Easter Season), to St. Tikhon’s, the Orthodox Theological Seminary some 25 or so minutes away from Scranton, the location of our seminary.

There, we attended the final few minutes of an afternoon prayer ser-



vice in a small chapel. We don’t know how long it had been going on, but it was smoky, it was rhythmic, it was solemn... and there were no pews. Everyone stood and no one went near a wall where the temptation to lean might prove too strong. This set-up stuck with me!

A number of years later as a priest, I did a presentation at an event in the PNCC’s Central Diocese and I repeated a portion of it at the beginning of coffee hour for about a month or so one summer after arriving at St. Mary’s. The presentation was on the different postures that a worshipper engages in during the course of a worshipping year at a parish.

Since then, I’ve incorporated and expanded that talk into “Explanation Masses” I’ve done at the Kurs Encampment, a Seniorate Lenten Retreat, and the National Men’s Spiritual Retreat. But, I have never done an “Explanation Mass” here at St. Mary’s because, well, each time I do one, it grows by 20 minutes or so – the next one might be 4 hours!



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I really am reminded of that content every Easter Season. A requirement of the Contemporary Rite of the Mass is that the faithful remain standing throughout the Eucharistic Prayer for the 7 Sundays of Easter. And while I never dare look at anyone in the face when I make the faithful announcement “Let us remain standing for our Eucharistic Prayer this day”, I always hear audible grunts of the faithful who now are changing flight pattern from standing-to-kneeling-to-standing...I try not to smile!

While I include a phrase that this is the Paschal Posture, let’s strike the hammer while the iron is hot – why do we stand all Easter? Scripturally, we can pretty easily see that Paschal Posture; that is, to show life overcoming death, Jesus literally stood up- standing is victory, as no one dead can stand on his or her own volition.



Besides that most glorious first moment of Resurrection, there is some Old Testament scriptural history on the very act of standing. The standing erect position was adopted by priests



Savonarola Theological Seminary, PNCC

Opening Article (continued)

when exercising their ministry. Deuteronomy 18:5 states “for the Lord your God has chosen them and their descendants out of all your tribes to stand and minister in the Lord’s name always.”

But I obviously don’t want to write just about myself and my brothers in the ordained priesthood. I mean, except for the Liturgy of the Word prior to the gospel, the celebrant is standing the entire Holy Mass. In the last few centuries of the Church, the idea of the “royal Priesthood” that all Christians share has taken greater precedence in the life of the church. In some European countries, this led to the non-ordained congregants assuming the standing posture at the time for the Consecration of the elements...as well as standing for the reception of Holy Communion.



Rendering of the Council of Nicaea—325 AD (lots of pointy hats!)

325 AD. In fact, the law did more than encourage worshippers to stand during prayer; it forbade kneeling during prayer on Sundays, the Octave of Easter/Paschaltide, and feast days.

It was stated: “Forasmuch as there are certain persons who kneel on the Lord’s Day and in the days of Pentecost, therefore, to the intent that all things may be uniformly observed everywhere (in every parish), it seems good to the holy Synod that prayer be made to God standing.” [Canon 20, Council of the 318 Fathers Assembled in the City of Nicea in Bithynia.]

While this does indicate that kneeling was also a posture for prayer, it was deemed that standing was most appropriate for Sundays and the fifty days after Easter, while kneeling was permitted on weekdays.

We stand at the words of Christ at the Gospel, as has been ancient Christian tradition. During the holiest of seasons, we stand during the Eucharistic Prayer for the pause the liturgy takes in the priest becoming *Alter Christus*, “Another Christ.” The words of Institution during the Consecration are not just any words- they are the words of Jesus Christ that He specifically tells us to remember and do.

Simply-stated, during the 40 days of Easter, the Ascension, and the 9-day Novena awaiting the Holy Spirit, we stand a little bit more to enhance the Church’s Easter joy in its most prominent and ancient prayerful pose. As noted in the trip to St. Tikhon’s some 20 or so years ago, the Eastern Rite/Orthodox churches never stopped standing...for us, may we enjoy the change of view it offers during the most holy portion of Mass!

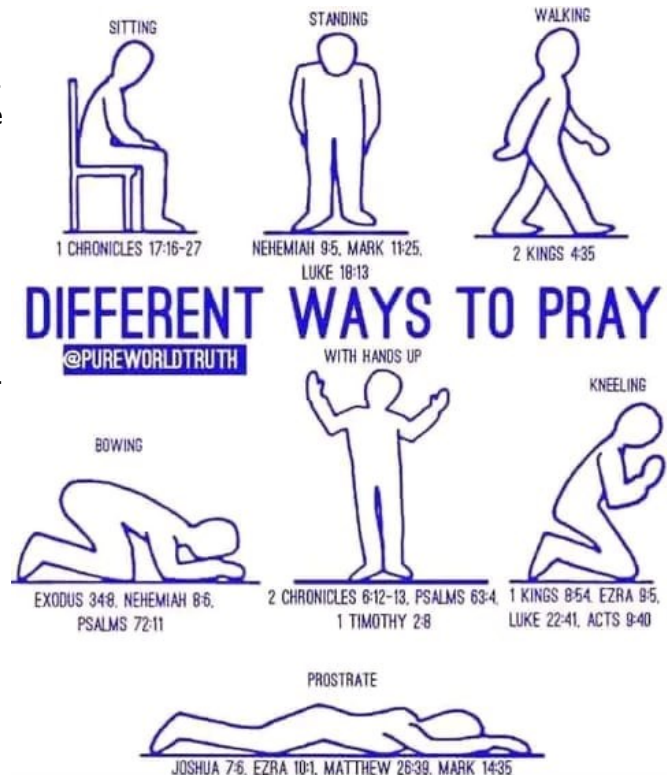
Fr. Jason



Standing in prayer from the catacombs of St. Priscilla

For many centuries, standing was THE position for prayer, with some of the most ancient carvings of prayer in Christian Catacombs featuring congregants standing in the “orans” posture. It wasn’t until Lent formed, and developed into its season featuring humility and penitence that the more humble posture of kneeling was adopted.

Simply, standing shows great reverence for God. What started as a practice of scripture and culture became church law at the Great Council of Nicaea in



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April Events

With Easter taking place on the final day of March, April was a bit quieter than normal, but events took place for the good of the congregation nonetheless-

*The St. Mary's Bowling League wrapped up its regular course of competition in April. The league continues to bowl at Red Circle in Parma



*Northeast Ohio was perhaps the site with the clearest view of the total solar eclipse that took place on Monday, April 8. Clouds seemed to migrate east, leaving us with those 3 plus minutes of solar eclipse "totality" that was absolutely breathtaking. The resounding message from parishioners was "that was way better than I thought it was going to be!"

*The parish enjoyed meeting at Antonio's Pizza in the Shoppes at Parma. We had a restaurant fundraiser there on



Thursday, April 11 that proved to be well-attended by many of the parishioners and enjoyed by all. I mean, who doesn't like having a choice of pizza, pasta, garlic bread, and more?!

*The weekly parish Food Ministry continued to thrive, serving roughly 400 meals over the 4 Wednesdays of April



*Fr. Jim Ploskonka served the parish of All Saints in Sterling Hts, MI throughout the month, offering Sunday Masses each week.



Fr. Jason has forms in his office for any eligible parish youth to attend. Or, you can download and complete the registration forms and submit them through Fr. Jason. All information and registration forms are here: www.convo2024.com

*The parish Bible Study met twice as they study "The Twelve Disciples" By Douglas Connelly. This particular study should wrap up early summer.

*New officers of Council 305 of the Polish National Alliance (PNA) Micheal Wisniewski, V.President; Marian Sleczkowski, Secretary, Very Rev. Bruce Sleczkowski, President; Henrietta Kleckner, Treasurer.



Convo 2024 is Coming!

Parents and Grandparents of youth ages 12 to 17, and Young Adults ages 18 to 20, please remember to register for Convo 2024 being held July 22nd through 26th at Mercyhurst University in Erie, Pennsylvania. This is only a hop and a skip away from us!



Bowling Tournament Canceled

Below is the official communication addressed to Prime Bishop Mikovsky, Bishop Mack, Bishop Sobiechowski, Bishop Nowicki, Very Rev. Fathers, Rev. Fathers, Priests, Deacons, Parish Administrators and all previous bowlers on our registry regarding the cancellation of the 2024 Bowling Tournament.

"This correspondence is being sent to inform everyone that, after concurrence with Prime Bishop and executive members of the National Tournament Committee, the May 24-26, 2024, PNCC/YMSofR Bowling Tournament, planned in Parma, Ohio, is being cancelled due to a lack of participants. We are sad to have had to make this decision as we were looking forward to hosting the **77th Tournament** and enjoying a fun-filled weekend with all the participants and guests.

It is our hope that the unavailability of attendees this year is not an indication of a lack of future interest as it would be truly unfortunate to see this long-running PNCC event come to an end! It is important to us to gain an understanding regarding this year's attendance level and gather information to assist with future tournaments, including the 2025 tournament. To do so a survey from SurveyMonkey, was emailed to everyone who has been receiving the tournament information to date. It is available here: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/7KWGCBS>

We encourage *everyone* to *please* look for this email in the upcoming days and complete and return the survey in the timeframe given. Your responses will be genuinely appreciated.

We will be returning any payments received from individuals or parishes for bowling fees or ads in the program book. To anyone who has made a hotel reservation I remind you to be sure to cancel it, so you do not get charged.

Thank you for your understanding, and your assistance, through the survey, with moving forward toward many successful tournaments to come. If you have any questions feel free to contact me.

God bless our Polish National Catholic Church



Western Diocese Word of God Study—Coming Soon!

Jesus *and the* Jewish Roots of Mary

Unveiling the Mother of the Messiah

By Brent Pitre

Facilitated by:

Very Reverend John Kowalczyk

Reverend Dr. Jim Ploskonka



JESUS *and the*
JEWISH ROOTS
of MARY

Unveiling the Mother of the Messiah

BRANT PITRE

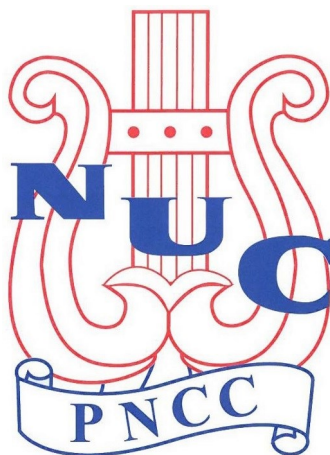
Bestselling Author of Jesus and the Jewish Roots of the Eucharist

National United Choirs Meets at St. Mary's

The National Board of the PNCC United Choirs met at St. Mary's PNCC in Parma, OH Friday, April 26 & Saturday, April 27.

The group began with lunch on Friday of delicious cold cuts and more. Fr. Jason Soltysiak, Pastor of St. Mary's, then led a retreat for the group that began with afternoon prayer and then a thorough SWOT analysis of the organization.

The Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats were meticulously collated, with some addressed in real-time and oth-



ers to be saved for their official meeting the next day.

The Rt. Rev. John Mack, Bishop-Ordinary of the Buffalo-Pittsburgh Diocese served as celebrant of a special 4:30pm Holy Mass for the NUC board as well as some curious members of the congregation. Fr. Jason and Fr. Jim Ploskonka served as concelebrants.

The group broke for dinner and reconvened the next day for a morning of meeting to address the agenda and the group's work for the next period of time. It was felt to have been a productive and eye-opening meeting, with the host diocese making sure all know the upcoming Western Diocesan Concert taking place the weekend of June 21-23 in Milwaukee, WI.



From the Parish Chair Susan Boehnlein

Happy Spring,

I hope everyone is enjoying the early blooming plants and not suffering too much from allergies. Despite all of the rain the church is holding up well, the lawn not so much. The rain is causing the grass to grow more quickly than can be reasonably cut and our "new" mower now needs to be repaired.

It's been a busy Spring for St. Mary's with an early Easter. We had a very

successful sale of our church-made kielbaski and the choir did very well with its kielbasa sale. New light bulbs were installed in the Fellowship Hall and Sanctuary courtesy of fellow parishioners; our annual fire inspection required new emergency exit lights to be installed—can you pick out where?

St. Mary's Parish Committee (Board of Directors) meets monthly and we have been discussing some policy changes that will be further discussed our Semi-Annual

Parish Meeting in August. As a member of good financial standing parishioners have a voice

and vote at those meetings – I hope you will attend. Please let me know if you have any concerns or comments about our parish happenings.



7th Annual YMSofR National Men's Spiritual Retreat

"Iron Sharpens Iron, as one person sharpens another." Proverbs 27:17

The upcoming Men's Spiritual Retreat, scheduled from June 12th to 15th, promises to be a transformative experience, highlighted by keynote speaker Retired SSG Earl Granville of the Army National Guard. Don't miss this opportunity to participate in a gathering aimed at spiritual growth and renewal. Secure your spot for the retreat by signing up here: <https://sites.google.com/view/ymsofrmensretreat/home>

This presents a remarkable opportunity for a retreat to deepen our connection with the Spirit of the Lord. Set amidst picturesque surroundings, it offers abundant food, insightful speakers, ample time for reflection and contemplation, opportunities for fellowship, the creation of lasting memories, and significant spiritual growth. Additionally, arrangements for carpooling are available, allowing us to partake in the meaningful experience of raising the cross together. The comprehensive package includes accommodation, all meals, and necessary materials, all for the reasonable price of \$150.00. See Fr. Jason, Fr. Jim, or YMSofR Branch #29 President Chuck Repede for more information.



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Various Announcements

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER – For each Sunday in May we use the 1st Eucharistic Prayer on p. 77.

POLISH PARADE – Thank you to all who participated in the May 5th Polish Constitution Day celebration and parade. The weather, though forecasted to be poor, held out wonderfully. The Cavs even did their part by winning a game 7 to add to the festivity. A fun afternoon! A full write up with pictures next month.

EASTER SEASON CHANGES – At the conclusion of the Gospel on Ascension Day May 9th, the Paschal Candle was extinguished and the other 2 symbols of Resurrection were removed from the Sanctuary. We still rejoice with Alleluias, but we follow the chronological changes of scripture within our liturgy.

BIBLE STUDY – Our next Bible Study takes place 6pm on May 15.

MARIAN DEVOTIONS – will be celebrated in English & Polish weekly during May. The schedule is posted in our newsletter calendar and is updated in our weekly bulletins. Our next devotion is this Friday, May 17 at noon. Consider

attending these Eucharistic Devotions in honor of the Blessed Mother, patroness of our Parish. It is an opportunity to see one of the unique liturgies of the church: Litany, Exposition, & a small procession.

CLERGY CONFERENCE – The clergy of the Western Diocese meet in Chicago this week for their annual retreat and conference. Though Fr. Jason cannot attend in person, he will be zooming-in as necessary. Please keep the diocesan clergy in your prayers Monday through Wednesday.

MEMORIAL DAY – Services for Memorial Day will take place at Sacred Heart of Jesus Cemetery on W. 54th at 10am on May 27. If the weather is inclement, services will be at St. Mary's at 10:15am.

MEN'S RETREAT – The 7th Men's Retreat takes place June 12-15 at Spojnia Farm in Waymart, PA. We would love to have more men of St. Mary's in attendance, as our retreat has been growing yearly. The theme this year is "Iron Sharpens Iron". The cost is \$150 per person. See Fr. Jason if interested.

TRUNK SALE - The annual Spring Trunk (and Bake) Sale is scheduled to take place on Saturday, June 1. This will fea-

ture a bake sale, lunch food on the grill (especially Steve's special burgers), and many locals selling their wares. Flyers will be available shortly.

PARISH PROPERTY CLEAN UP – Due to the inclement weather, the parish property clean-up, originally scheduled for Saturday, May 11 has been rescheduled to Monday, May 13 from 4-6pm. Dinner will be served as well to those who may lend a helping hand.

EASTER – The Easter Season begins with the Resurrection of Jesus on Easter Sunday and lasts 50 days, until the day of Pentecost, this year on May 28. The length of the celebration reminds us of the importance of this season and the importance of the Resurrection event in the story of our salvation. Please keep your Easter spirit strong over these next few weeks! We show this by remaining standing throughout the Canon/Eucharistic Prayer of the Mass, as we add extra "alleluias" throughout the liturgy, and as our Easter decorations stand out in our church proper.

KURS – The National Kurs encampment takes place July 4-13. This is a PNCC national camp for kids at Spojnia Farm in Waymart, PA. Visit kurscamp.org for more information.

Scheduled Mass Intentions at St. Mary's

May 5 – John Paul Repko of. by Cheryl Repko

May 12 – Barb Thome of. by Barbara & Bruce Bogzevitz

May 19 – Stanley & Yolanta Kwiatek of. by John Spilka

May 26 – Carl & Helen Bogzevitz of. by Bruce & Barbara Bogzevitz

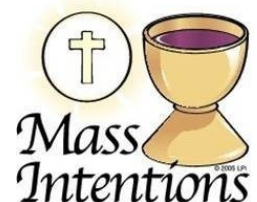
June 2 – Joan Spilka (Wedding Anv.) of. by husband John Spilka

June 9 – Paul J. Repko Jr. of. by Cheryl Repko

June 16 – Len Pryer of. by daughter Evonne Pryer

June 23 – Rt. Rev. Jan Dawidziuk of. by wife Anna, daughter Elizabeth & family

June 30 – Elaine Tiffe of. by son Jeffery Tiffe



Rest of year open dates: July 7; Aug. 11, 18, 25; Sep. 8; Oct. 27; Dec 8, 15, 22

May Days of Note



May Birthdays

- 1st – Marianne Viers (Misiewicz)
- 1st – Bruce Toburen
- 2nd – Tom Bedocs
- 2nd – Pat Glatzer
- 5th – Jack Amburgey
- 9th – Demi (Paulus) Bengston
- 9th – Lolly Spilka
- 12th – Maxwell Bengston
- 13th – Debbie Moritz
- 13th – Chuck Repede
- 15th – George Ziefle
- 16th – Adrienne Michalczyk
- 18th – John Grmovsek
- 18th – Jim Matteson
- 22nd – Dolores DeLong
- 24th – Wendy Zychowski
- 28th – Roseanne Ziefle
- 29th – Andre Spanjol
- 30th – Jo Ann Long
- 30th – Audrey Spanjol



Happy Anniversary

May Anniversaries

Someone plan a May wedding!

Have we missed a birthday or anniversary? Just give us a shout so we can fix any errors that have been made :-)

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OH on Facebook or
subscribe to our

“May is for Mary”

Every tree, every flower
is a poem for thee,
Every landscape is richer
when thy shrines grace it;
Dost thou watch the lamps
that burn at thy grottoes?
Dost thou hark to the chorus
that swells through the ages?
Dost thou hear the canticles
that rise from thy children,
Virgin of virgins
and Mother of mothers,
Royal priestess descended
from Abraham and David?
Chosen from all eternity
queen rose of the world?
Remember, O Mary,
despite all thy mildness,
Thou art terrible
like an army in battle array;
Arise
from thy bridal chambers in heaven,
Chase away the dark clouds
that shut out the sun,
The mists that hover
over the rivers and brooks,
Send a new spring
full of shining flowers,
Spring in the hearts
of youths and maidens,
Spring in the souls
of men and women,
Spring in the darkened minds
of the rulers,
That prophecy be not made in vain,
That this generation, too,
will call thee blessed.

Anonymous (May 1950)

Our Prayer List

Praying for St. Mary's Parishioners & Friends

Bill & Pat Glatzer	Bob Kaczmarek
Bill Kastak	Anna Dawidziuk
George Makovicka	John Spilka
Johanna Markiewicz	Patrick Kmitt
Jim Boehnlein	Sauna Smullen
Marty Bengela	Tom Putynski
Jeff Pardy	Millie Dominik
Kathleen Beres	Joseph Bischoff
Al & Donna Micka	Phil Symons
Ed Pierson	George Bennett
Greg Hodor	Pattie Dotson
Nicole McGivern	Jack Spilka
Elaine Repede	David Vaden
Wanda Clark	Beth Chihill
Michael Cosevin	Helen Cummings
Laina Dachtal	Michael McGivern
Jay Grabowsky	Pam Chesar
Cecelia Hall	Caroline Kunes
Linda Marks	Thomas Lill
John & Anne Nemetz	Rhonda Smith
Al Piniecki	Carol Boesch
Joanie True	Daniel Rinella
Penny Dennison	Tom Slomka
Wojciech Fedorowicz	Tom Pietka
Pam Tropiano	Linda Vect
Dennis and Sue Vect	Marcus Vaughn, Jr.
Bryson Dzuroff	Fr. Sr. Joseph Soltysiak
Doreen Stanley	Jane Hunter
Dennis Thome	The Finnie Family
Carlene Fliss	Jim Fliss Jr.
John Wisniewski	Cathy Pieciak
Nan Cramer	Barb & Jim Lukas
Mike Pescitelli	Kathy Robertson
Phil Repko	Richard & Edna Samelson
Jim Giles	Kathleen Sobocinski
Bill Zychowski	Loretta Baldwin
Donna Kidd	Paulette Lilli
Joseph Zubel	Margaret & Lew Heifner
Marilyn Girard	Courtney Austin
Stephanie Milla	Shannon Alberino
Jayden Pieciak	Joyce Zeigler
Sam Bass	Katie Stallbaum
Marcia Klein	Kim Penney
Dan Ewanko	Amanda Monyak
Roseanne & George Ziefle	Judy Alexin
Connie Benko	Jenni Avondet
Karsen Winters	Shyanna Tiller
Maria Muttillio	Laurie Slominski
Sage McLane	Dave Tuma

WE ALSO REMEMBER

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

