



Catholic Fraternal Bi-Weekly

Jednota

THE UNION

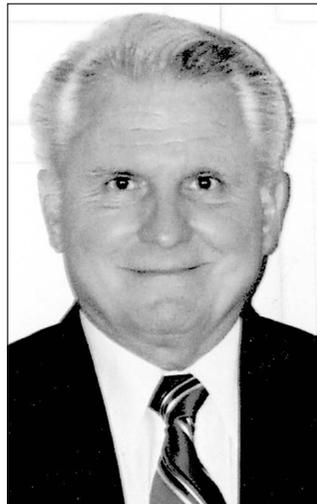
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Fr. Stephen Furedek
Our Founder

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE FIRST CATHOLIC SLOVAK UNION OF THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA

Volume 117 WEDNESDAY, APRIL 30, 2008 Number 5777



Andrew M. Rajec

President's Annual Report for the Year 2007

Presented March 14, 2008

Fellow Officers, Members of the Board of Directors and Members of the First Catholic Slovak Union.

This is my second annual report to you as President.

I'm sure all of you are keenly aware through the newspapers, television, internet etc. that the sub-prime mortgage crisis triggered a widespread concern in the world financial markets. The U.S. dollar continues to devalue and home prices across the country are declining, along with a tremendous surge in mortgage foreclosures.

In what was in 2007 and continues to be a very competitive and challenging economic, interest rate and insurance marketing environment, I am proud to report that in 2007 the Society again reached historic milestones in both assets and surplus.

Highlights of the 2007 Annual Statement filed with the Ohio Department of Insurance are as follows:

1. Assets increased to \$203,655,235. The Society exceeded the \$200,000,000 mark for the first time in its history. Some fraternalists actually experienced significant annuity withdrawals, which we did not. We continue to offer very competitive annuity rates but we have chosen not to aggressively "chase the market".

2. Surplus grew an impressive \$1,556,670 to a new all-time high of \$13,112,264. Note, that we put an additional \$200,000.00 into a reserve for extra marketing initiatives for 2008. Without that reserve our surplus would be \$200,000.00 higher.

Net income after realized gains/losses and after paid dividends was \$1,720,950 compared to \$1,169,361 in 2005 and \$1,539,009 in 2006. We decreased general and fraternal expenses by \$301,048 over 2006. Achieving these numbers in the future may be difficult depending on the general economy.

3. Net gain from operations was \$2,377,063 compared to \$1,798,777 in 2006. The gain in net operating income was achieved in a very challenging investment environment where it became ever more difficult to invest our funds in safe, secure higher yielding securities.

The Society continues to make a conscious effort to reduce the maturity dates of the bond portfolio. We only invest in the highest grades of securities as identified by the NAIC (National Association of Insurance Commissioners) for the protection of our Members. Our Treasurer and Executive Committee have spent many more hours in 2007 in managing our investment portfolio.

4. The 2007 results include a total dividend payment to members of \$461,771 in 2007, (an increase from the 2006 dividend payment of \$309,671), which reflects payment on in-force policies.

5. Reserves are at a very conservative level and in conformance with Ohio Department of Insurance regulations. In addition to policy reserves, the Society investment reserves are \$6,164,030 (\$2,437,842 - AVR; \$3,726,188 - IMR) as required by current

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Several FCSU officers and their families attended the gala reception at the Radisson Hotel in Pittsburgh to honor Joseph Senko. Present were L-R National Treasurer George F. Matta, National President Andrew M. Rajec, Geraldine Hricik, Regional Director Regis Brekosky, Joseph Senko, National President Emeritus Thomas Hricik, Idka Rajec, Supreme Court Member Rudolph Ondrejco, and Fraternal Director Susan Ondrejco.

Joseph T. Senko Honored as Fraternalist of the Year

Each year the Fraternalist Societies of Greater Pittsburgh (FSGP) honors one of its members who has displayed the true fraternal spirit. The Fraternalist of the Year is awarded to an individual who has worked and dedicated himself to the cause of fraternalism.

This year's honoree as "Fraternalist of the Year" was Joseph T. Senko. Over 200 people came to honor Joseph Senko at the annual FSGP testimonial banquet held Saturday, April 5, 2008, at the Radisson Hotel in Pittsburgh. Among those who attended were FCSU national officers, National President Andrew Rajec, National Treasurer George Matta, Fraternal Director Susan Ondrejco, National President Emeritus Thomas M. Hricik, and Supreme Court Member Rudolph Ondrejco.

Joseph T. Senko has had long and distinguished career in Pittsburgh fraternal life and

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FLEXIBLE PREMIUM DEFERRED ANNUITY

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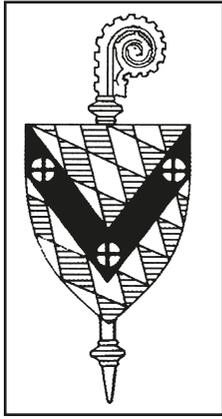
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Insights and Viewpoints



St. Vincent Archabbey — Homilies Fr. Campion P. Gavaler, O.S.B. and Father Demetrius R. Dumm, O.S.B.

May 11, 2008

Pentecost Sunday

Gospel Summary

On Pentecost Sunday we celebrate the wonderful good news that the risen Lord has poured out his Spirit upon us, first of all to convince us of his victory over sin and death, and then to enable us to continue his work of salvation by our own love and concern for others.

As we can well imagine, the disciples were filled with fear and foreboding after the death of their master. But suddenly, Jesus is there

among them, radiant with life. He shows them his terrible wounds, which have now become beautiful emblems of his love for them. He offers them his peace--that deep, calm, resonant sense of well-being, which is so different from their own fear and uncertainty. This peace becomes possible through the presence of his Spirit in them.

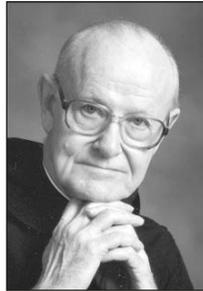
And then Jesus tells them (and us) what possessing the Spirit will mean in our lives. Henceforth, we will need to be converted from our natural tendency to be self-centered, cautious and defensive to an attitude of generous and loving concern for others. This new way of living will be manifested first and foremost by our willingness to forgive others. This would be impossible if we did not enjoy the powerful presence of the Spirit who enables us to overcome our constant judgmental tendencies.

Life Implication

As fragile human beings, we know the experience of living in fear and of being anxious and worried about many things, some of which exist only in our imagination. Jesus, having absorbed the ultimate violence, offers us his peace and thereby enables us to be confident and joyful in the face of uncertainty and threat. This represents a real experience of liberation from the paralysis of fear--a paralysis that often prevents us from doing beautiful and risky things, like giving cut flowers!

With this peace and joy comes the obligation to share our blessings with others. It was

John 20:19-23



Demetrius R. Dumm,
O.S.B.

once thought that the command of Jesus to forgive or retain sins was addressed only to priests and referred only to the Sacrament of Reconciliation. But, in fact, this charge, in a less formal fashion, is undoubtedly addressed to all the followers of Jesus. We must all accept the wonderful and awesome responsibility of offering or withholding forgiveness. In this case, the sin of omission looms large and should make us all examine our consciences in regard to the many times that we may have persisted in nursing old injuries or have refused to make allowance for extenuating circumstances in the lives of those we call sinners.

In this regard, we should recall the very strong words of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount: "Judge not, that you be not judged. For with the judgment you pronounce you will be judged, and the measure you give will be the measure you get" (Matthew 7:1-2). We all know how much we hope to have a merciful judge and now we also know how to assure that happy outcome.

It is, of course, very difficult to live such an ideal forgiveness. And that is why Jesus offers us the Holy Spirit who, if given half a chance, will empower us to become the kind of gentle, caring and compassionate persons that can make a real difference in a world that desperately needs the witness of love and forgiveness. Let us all rejoice in this wonderful gift of the Spirit.

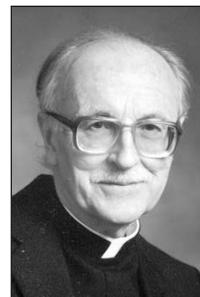


May 18, 2008

Trinity Sunday

Gospel Summary

John tells us that he has written his gospel so that we may come to believe in Jesus, the Son of God, and thus have life in his name. To help us come to belief, John throughout his gospel talks about people like us -- some who believe, some who half-believe, some who refuse to believe. The context of this gospel passage is the story of Nicodemus. Nicodemus comes to Jesus "at night" and represents those of us who hold back, and thus never completely leave the darkness to enter the light and love of eternal life.



Campion P. Gavaler,
O.S.B.

The first sentence of the passage summarizes not only our Trinity Sunday gospel, but John's entire gospel about the meaning of Jesus and the meaning of our human existence: "God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life."

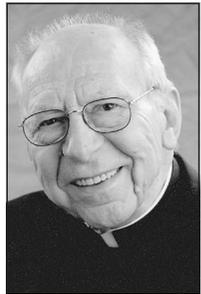
Life Implications

The feast of the Holy Trinity reminds us that every Sunday's gospel helps unfold the mystery of divine life: in each gospel Jesus makes the Father's truth and love present in the world through the power of the Holy Spirit. Every Sunday's Eucharist is the prayer of the church in living communion with the Risen Lord praising the Father through the power of the Spirit. Every good work we do is to share in Christ's mission of making the Father's truth and love present in the world because we share Christ's Spirit. And we experience even now in faith some fulfillment of our human existence through the peace and joy of living in the communion of divine love with Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

The gospel of Trinity Sunday further reminds us of the constant reality which Jesus addresses in every gospel of the church year. That reality is the "world" which God loves so much as to give it his only Son. We are that world -- human beings tragically alienated from God, alienated from each other, alienated from our own deepest personal identity as children of God. This is the world described in the first chapters of Genesis, in every evening's TV news, in our own experience of life.

Particularly this year when many in our world seem to prefer darkness to light, we need to celebrate the feast of the Holy Trinity with prayer of steadfast hope. God still does love the world. And we can still come out of its dark night to accept his only Son, whom he has given to us so that we might have life in him. Only in his light and in his life can we enjoy peace among ourselves and within ourselves, a peace that surpasses human understanding.

Reflections on Our Christianity Msgr. Edward V. Rosack



Msgr. Edward V. Rosack

He Taught with Authority, Part I

Our Lord Jesus Christ caught the attention quickly of the leaders of the Jewish Religion because he not only challenged them, he healed their sick and "taught with authority and not like scribes." (Matthew 7:29) He was not one who shrank from his mission or who was covered by the religious establishment.

Just before he cured the man with the shriveled hand, Jesus "looked around at them with anger, for he was deeply grieved that they had closed their minds against him." (Mark 3:5) After the cure, "when the Pharisees went outside, they immediately began to plot with the Herodians how they might destroy him." (Mark 3:6) (The Herodians were a priestly religious party under the reign of King Herod and his successors who were allied with the Sadducees and in opposition to the Pharisees. Their connection with Herod was through Mariamne Boethus, one of the wives of Herod who made his and her sons successfully high priests. The rabbis referred to these Herodians as "Boethusians." In the Pharisees opposition to Jesus they nevertheless allied themselves with the Pharisees. Jesus warned his disciples, "Keep your eyes open! Be on your guard against the yeast (teaching) of the Pharisees and the yeast of Herod." (Mark 8:15) This was the first plot to kill Jesus.)

When the demon which possessed the youth making him unable to speak was expelled by Jesus, the Pharisees in their hatred of Jesus exclaimed, "He casts out demons through the prince of demons." (Matthew 9:34)

There was the incident at the Sheep Pool (also known as Bethesda, Bethsaida, Be(t)zatha) when Jesus cured the sick man by saying, "Stand up! Pick up your mat and walk!" (John 5:8) He did this on the Sabbath and some of the Jews objected telling the man who had been cured, "...you are not allowed to carry that mat around." (John 5:10) When these Jews learned that it was Jesus who told the man to do so, they "were even more determined to kill him (because) he not only was breaking the Sabbath but, worse still, was speaking of God as his own Father, thereby making himself God's equal." (John 5:18)

The Pharisees never ate without scrupulously washing their hands, they never ate anything from the market without first sprinkling it and even washed cups, jugs and kettles. (Mark 7:3-4) Jesus replied to their objections by saying, "You have made a fine art of setting aside God's commandments in the interest of keeping your traditions." (Mark 7:9) Then he went on to cite their practice of contributing to God ("korban") instead of supporting their mother and father. (Mark 7:11-12)

Following this incident and after he got home, his disciples asked Jesus about the proverb, "It is not what goes into a man's mouth that makes him impure; it is what comes out of his mouth." (Matthew 15:11) Jesus replied, what he eats "does not penetrate his

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JEDNOTA

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FIRST CATHOLIC SLOVAK UNION
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THRU JUNE 30, 2008

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Kenneth A. Arendt, National Secretary

**Attention Members of the
Msgr. Stephen Krasula District and
the Msgr. John E. Rura
District, New York and New Jersey**

The Membership and Marketing Committee will hold a Sales Seminar on Sunday, June 1, 2008, at 1:00 p.m. at St. John Nepomucene Church Parish Hall, 411 East 66th Street, New York City.

These seminars are open to all members of the first Catholic Slovak Union interested in acquiring knowledge about our insurance and annuity portfolio.

At the seminars, sales brochures and new 2001 CSO rate charts will be distributed and discussed. All branch officers, district officers, recommenders and First Catholic Slovak Union members interested in learning and selling our insurance and annuity products are urged to attend these seminars. Form a car pool...lets get involved in establishing new membership.

Please be sure to make your reservations by May 28 by calling Executive Secretary Kenneth Arendt at 1/800-533-6682 or Maria Zakovic at 646/823-3561.

Until we meet at the seminar...

Good Luck and God Bless

Andrew R. Harcar, Sr.

National Vice President &

Membership and Marketing Chairman

REMINDERS

Please send all articles for publication (both English and Slovak) to Jednota Estates, 1011 Rosedale Avenue, Middletown, PA 17057.

Readers are reminded that all address changes for the JEDNOTA newspaper must be done at the Home Office in Independence, Ohio. If you have an address change, a cancellation or wish to receive the paper write to: First Catholic Slovak Union, FCSU Corporate Center, 6611 Rockside Rd., Independence, OH 44131-2398. Phone 1/800-JEDNOTA.

***A Sailing We Will Go
To Nassau in the Bahamas***



Come on board with the First Catholic Slovak Union for a four (4) night Caribbean cruise to Nassau in the Bahamas.

The Membership and Marketing Committee is sponsoring their 2008 membership meet from November 17-21 aboard the Majesty of the Seas.

Royal Caribbean's Majesty of the Seas is one of the most popular cruise

ships in the world. Our itinerary from Miami, Florida includes Cocoa Cay, Key West, Florida and Nassau, Bahamas.

The cost for inside stateroom which includes the cruise, port and government taxes, all pre-paid gratuities and transfer from the airport to the cruise ship and back is \$454.72. The cost for an outside stateroom is \$494.72. (Optional insurance and airfare package is available through Paul J. Hudak of Adventure International Travel, Inc. at 216/228-7171 or 1/800-542-2487). A valid U.S. passport will be required.

The First Catholic Slovak Union is not responsible for your travel arrangements to and from Miami, Florida. Please contact Adventure International Travel, Inc. or your own travel agency.

The trip is open to all members of the First Catholic Slovak Union and their guests.

If you have any further questions, please contact the Home Office and ask for Karen at 1/800-533-6682.

Until we meet at the Meet!

**Andrew R. Harcar, Sr.
Chairman, Membership
and Marketing Committee**



Flexible Premium Deferred Annuity

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as your financial situation allows. Additional deposits are not mandatory.

At the retirement age you choose, the funds accumulated in the Flexible Premium Deferred Annuity may be withdrawn using any of the FCSU's lump sum or periodic income settlement options.

Features of the Flexible Premium Deferred Annuity include:

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- Withdrawal Privileges-Since annuities are meant to be long-term investments for providing retirement funds, funds withdrawn during the first six years of your contract are subject to an FCSU Early Withdrawal Charge. You may withdraw 10% of your 'beginning of the year balance' with no FCSU Early Withdrawal Charge.
- Your interest will be added to your account. You may, however, elect to have your interest paid directly to you on a monthly, quarterly, semi-annually, or annually basis. This is called an Interest Option and the interest rate is slightly lower than if you left your interest to accumulate.
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**If each member would sign up just one new member,
we could double our Society immediately.**

Think About It!

Insights and Viewpoints

Reflections on Our Christianity

continued from page 2

being, but enters his stomach only and passes into the latrine. Thus did he render all foods clean. He went on: 'What emerges from within a man, that and nothing else is what makes him impure. Wicked designs come from the deep recesses of the heart, acts of fornication, theft, murder, adulterous conduct, greed, maliciousness, deceit, sensuality, envy, blasphemy, arrogance, an obtuse spirit. All these evils come from within and render a man impure.' (Mark 7:19-23) External practices make for good and necessary hygiene but neglecting them does not make a man impure.

The Jewish feast of Booths (Succoth, Tabernacles) was near. "...Jesus moved about Galilee. He had decided not to travel in Judea because some of the Jews were looking for a chance to kill him." (John 7:1) "Go up yourselves to the festival," he said to his disciples. "I'm not going up to this festival because the time is not yet ripe for me." (John 7:8) "However, once his brothers had gone up to the festival he too went up, but as if in secret and not for all to see." (John 7:10) "During the festival, naturally, the Jews were looking for him, asking, 'Where is that troublemaker?'" (John 7:11) There was much debate about Jesus among the crowd but "no one dared talk openly about him, however, for fear of the Jews." (John 7:13)

A Pharisee invited Jesus to dine with him. Jesus accepted and reclined at the Pharisee's table. "...The Pharisee was surprised that he had not first performed the ablutions prescribed before eating." (Luke 11:38) Jesus noted this and replied, "You Pharisees! You cleanse the outside of cup and dish, but within you are filled with rapaciousness and evil." (Luke 11:39) He continued lecturing, adding, "You love the front seats in synagogues and marks of respect in public. Woe to you! You are like hidden tombs over which men walk unawares." (Luke 11:43-44) "In reply one of the lawyers said to him, 'Teacher, in speaking this way you insult us too.' "Woe to you lawyers also!" Jesus replied, continuing, "You lay impossible burdens on men but will not lift a finger to lighten them." (Luke 11:45-46) Jesus went on lecturing the lawyers and "after he had left this gathering, the scribes and Pharisees began to manifest fierce hostility to him and to make him speak on a multitude of questions, setting traps to catch him in his speech." (Luke 11:53-54)

"Certain Pharisees came to him, 'Go on your way!' they said. 'Leave this place! Herod is trying to kill you.' His answer was: 'Go tell that fox, 'Today and tomorrow I cast out devils and perform cures, and on the third day my purpose is accomplished. For all that, I must proceed on course today, tomorrow, and the day after, since no prophet can be allowed to die anywhere except in Jerusalem'." (Luke 13:31-33)

"...some of the Jews again reached for rocks to stone him. Jesus protested to them, 'Many good deeds have I shown you from the Father. For which of these do you stone me?' 'It is not for any 'good deed' that we are stoning you,' the Jews retorted, 'but for blaspheming. You who are only a man are making yourself God'." (John 10:31-33)

Jesus replied in part, "If I do not perform my Father's works, put no faith in me. But if I do perform them, even though you put no faith in me, put faith in these words, so as to realize what it means that the Father is in me and I in him." (John 10:37-38)

"At these words they again tried to arrest him, but he eluded their grasp." (John 10:39)

Jesus said, "You cannot give yourself to God and money. The Pharisees, who were avaricious (greedy, fond of money) men, heard all this and began to deride him. He said to them, 'You justify yourselves in the eyes of men, but God reads your hearts. What man thinks important, God holds in contempt'." (Luke 16:13-15)

Following the raising of Lazarus from the dead, "...the chief priests and the Pharisees called a meeting of the Sanhedrin. 'What are we to do,' (could be the rhetorical, "Why are we doing nothing?") they said 'with this man performing all sorts of signs? If we let him go on like this, the whole world will believe him. Then the Romans will come in and sweep away our sanctuary and our nation'." (John 11:47-48)

Caiaphas, the high priest that year, told the Sanhedrin, "...Can you not see that it is better for you to have one man die (for the people- in place of the people) than to have the whole nation destroyed...From that day onward there was a plan afoot to kill him." (John 11:49-50 and 53)

At the time of his messianic entry into Jerusalem (Palm Sunday), "Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to him, 'Teacher, rebuke your disciples.' He replied, 'If they were to keep silence, I tell you the very stones would cry out'." (Luke 19:39-40)

In the court of the Gentiles, Jesus overturned in the temple the tables of the money-changers and the seats of those who sold doves. (Matthew 21:12, Mark 11:15-16 and Luke 19:45)

See also: John 2:13-17. This is the only incident in the Bible that connects Jesus with violence.

"Then Jesus told the crowds and his disciples: 'The scribes and the Pharisees have succeeded Moses as teachers; therefore, do everything and observe everything they tell you. But do not follow their example. Their words are bold but their deeds are few. They bind up heavy loads, hard to carry, to lay on other men's shoulders, while they themselves will not lift a finger to budge them. All their works are performed to be seen. They widen their phylacteries and wear huge tassels. They are fond of places of honor at banquets and the front seats in synagogues, of marks of respect in public and of being called 'Rabbi'.'" (Matthew 23:1-7)

(Phylacteries [Hebrew: Tefillin] are two black leather boxes containing four scrolls of parchment inscribed with biblical verses. The verses are these: "Exodus 13:9-It shall be as a sign on your hand and as a reminder on your forehead; Exodus 13:16- Let this, then,

be as a sign on your hand and as a pendant on your forehead: with a strong hand the Lord has brought us out of Egypt; Deuteronomy 6:8- Bind them at your wrist as a sign and let them be as a pendant on your forehead; Deuteronomy 11:18- Therefore take these words of mine into your heart and soul. Bind them at your wrist as a sign, and let them be a pendant on your forehead.)

(Footnote to Deuteronomy 6:8- New American Bible-These injunctions were probably meant merely in a figurative sense: cf Ex. 13, 9.16. However, the later Jews understood them literally, and tied on their wrists and foreheads "phylacteries," boxes containing strips of parchment on which the words were inscribed; cf Mt 23:5- All their works are performed to be seen. They widen their phylacteries and wear huge tassels.)

(The leather box on the arm is known as "shel yad," "for the hand;" the one on the forehead is "shel rosh." The arm box has one compartment and contains the four biblical passages; the head box has four separate compartments in each of which one biblical passage is placed. These boxes are made from the skins of kosher livestock. The ties around the biblical selections are made from the washed tail hair of a kosher animal, preferably a calf. Males after the age of thirteen years and one day are obliged to wear the boxes during the daily morning service. A small minority of Jews wear these boxes all day long. The hand box is placed on the inner side of the left arm on two fist-widths from the shoulder blade; the head box two fist-width from the tip of the nose between the eyes. The hand box tie continues to be wound around the arm seven times and three times around the middle finger. The Samaritans did not observe this practice.)

(The word phylacteries appears only once in the Bible, Matthew 23:5 and is of Greek origin, phonetic spelling- fee-luck-tay-ree-own, meaning "to guard against evil," "to protect." In the Hellenistic period, it was an amulet.)

(to be continued)

◆◆◆ Apostleship of Prayer Intentions for May 2008

Human Dignity. That Christians may use literature, art, and mass media to create a culture which defends and promotes the values of the human person.

This month Pope Benedict XVI asks us to pray for those whose handiwork fills the media. We pray that artists of all kinds will create works that promote the dignity of the human person. The Pope urges artists and media executives to represent people as we are, creatures made in God's image. In his 2008 Message for World Communications Day, he said, "Man thirsts for truth." We know this is true because many works of art owe their success to the fact that they present the "truth, beauty, or greatness of the person, including the religious dimension."

Christian artists are called not to reject, but to redeem ungodly culture- as indeed they have been doing for twenty centuries. The history of western civilization is studded like the night sky with Christian works of art, greater and lesser stars by which we will steer. When the novelist Dostoevsky said, "Beauty will save the world," he meant that true beauty in nature or in art is a revelation of God that evokes the response of faith.

Barbara Nicolosi, Hollywood writer and teacher, asks Christians to stop complaining about immortality in the media and get busy ourselves making programs that are both morally and artistically good. "Our efforts to make film and television in a 'safe' Christian envelope will not be blessed," says Nicolosi. "We need to be in the middle of the industry, on the lots, on the sets and in the network and studio offices, working side by side with those who do not share our worldview, so as to bring God where he is not."

Whatever our circumstances, isn't that the evangelization we are all called to? The beauty of God should so shine through us that people we encounter will know they are infinitely lovable, infinitely valuable. We can do this with arts and the media, we can do this with our service, and we can also do it through our prayers.

Let us pray that the beauty of God goes out into the whole world through the arts and mass media, drawing many into close friendship with Jesus Christ.

Reflection

How do you affirm the dignity, beauty, and value of human beings in the things you do?

Mission Intention

Mary's guidance. That the Virgin Mary, Star of evangelization and Queen of the Apostles, may still guide missionaries with maternal affection, just as she accompanied the Apostles in the early stages of the Church.

Mary took part in the first novena. From the Ascension until Pentecost- nine days- Mary and the apostles prayed. It was natural for her to join the apostles as they waited in obedient prayer. She was like a mother to them. Jesus had already asked St. John to take her into his home as his own mother. She was there when the Holy Spirit fell on them. They received the power Jesus promised them to go out and proclaim salvation to the ends of the earth.

Recognizing that Mary supported the apostles by her motherly love and prayers, Benedict XVI asks us to pray that she may still accompany missionaries. She remains a model of virtue, wisdom, and love.

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President's Annual Report

continued from page 1

regulation.

These are significant accomplishments for the Society. More detailed analysis will be in the Actuarial Report, given by Ed DePersis of Bruce & DePersis, along with additional financial reports from our outside auditors, Hosack, Specht, Muetzel & Wood, LLP.

Further financial reports will be given by the Executive Secretary and the Treasurer. A membership and marketing report will be given by our Vice-President.

The foregoing deals with our financial health, but since we are a fraternal society, we must also be aware of our fraternal side. This is why our name is First Catholic Slovak Union. We are not just another insurance company.

During the past year I have attended Branch and District meetings in Pennsylvania, Ohio and Wisconsin, as well as several visits to our properties in Middletown, Pennsylvania. I, along with our Vice President, have set up booths at Slovak festivals and picnics in New Jersey and Ohio. I have also attended picnics in Pennsylvania and Wisconsin. I have accompanied Mr. Harcar on several sales seminars.

I have also attended the Slovak League of America and Slovak Catholic Federation meetings, the Pittsburgh Pact Commemoration in Pittsburgh, the Remembrance Mass for Fr. Jozef Tiso in Cleveland and the annual National Fraternal Congress meeting.

I have been able to attend the monthly Slovak Mass at St. Cyril and Methodius in Lakewood 6-8 times as well as local meetings of the Bratislava-Cleveland Sister Cities Organization. I have also had the opportunity to visit the Slovak Institute and the Benedictine High School in Cleveland several times.

I have made presentations at both the Slovak Catholic Sokol and First Catholic Slovak Ladies Association conventions during 2007. I still believe that a joining of Slovak Catholic fraternal is in the best interest of everyone and have said that to all who will listen. Obviously, it takes others to agree.

I am sure you have heard the old saying that "It takes two to tango".

Overall, we are making an effort to meet more people and make the Society's presence known. In all, it has been a busy year.

Each year in January, we join in the National March for Life in Washington D.C. We have been protective of life, revere life, endeavor to sustain life and coming from Slovak parentage we cannot do otherwise. We are a fraternal, and a fraternal is made up of people who recognize the sanctity of life. It is a gift from God.

Our Society was founded in 1890 by Father Stefan Furdek. He was responsible for our presence in the Middletown, PA area. He bought the original acreage there.

We now have approximately 300 acres with 2 modern office/mixed use buildings. The parcels have an appraised value of over \$10 million dollars, which is very conservatively carried on the Society's Statement at a much lower figure. We have the opportunity and obligation to build value on these holdings for the benefit of our Society's Membership. I have carefully examined these holdings and have had contacts with several investment professionals in the past year. Because of the drastic change in the investment environment starting in June, 2007 appetite for commercial investment and development has slowed dramatically just as it has in the residential market. We will continue to develop contacts

and position the Society for use of that property when the commercial investment climate improves.

Overall, from the financial perspective, 2007 was an excellent year.

The purpose of this Annual Meeting is twofold: first to review the past year and secondly to plan for the future.

Most fraternal, including the ethnic fraternal insurance companies, have experienced a declining membership. In our modern world younger people aren't "joiners" for many reasons, i.e. time, other interests, mobility etc.

Fraternal are founded on the lodge system. We will be taking positive steps to address the condition of our lodge system during 2008. I have been personally calling each Branch in our Society and talking to the President or Executive Secretary. The Branch system has been steadily deteriorating for the past 40 years. In my calls, I hear stories of nostalgia, despair, hope and frustration. Unfortunately, I am finding that many Branches exist in name only. Many Branches have no meetings, or if they do, only 2-3 Members attend.

We will merge Branches but we cannot merge inactive Branches with inactive Branches. Finding out who really are active Branches is what I am doing. In addition, merging Branches outside of their geographic area makes no sense. If we can't revive a Branch we will merge it with an active Branch in their geographic area. If we can't do that, we will administer the Branch from the Home Office, which in reality is what has been happening anyway for years in many cases.

I have said that we must have a copy of our Jednota newspaper in every Member household. This is our primary means of communication and in many cases the best way to get our insurance products and our culture in front of our Members' eyes. This is in the process of happening. You have seen notices of changed publishing dates in the Jednota.

As often happens some unexpected problems came up. We have identified our new mailing list but a problem in printing the Slovak language section has delayed implementation until May or June.

I have said with regard to our Society's future, "This is America". We need to recognize the fact that the "American Dream" also resulted in assimilation of our forefathers and us, their descendants. While we will honor and preserve our Catholic, Slovak heritage, we must also deal with reality.

Young consumers today are not making financial decisions based primarily on ethnic heritage. Their decisions are based primarily on cost, benefits, service etc. Our insurance and annuity products are excellent and competitive, but we must get the word out. That's our challenge.

In addition, if our Society wants to retain a Slovak character in coming generations, we must attract the wave of young immigrants that have come, and to a lesser extent still are coming to the U.S.

We have the greatest Slovak Society in the world, we will continue to prove it. I hope to meet more of you personally in the coming year.

Dakujem. Thank you.
Andrew M. Rajec
President

Report of the Executive Secretary March 14-15, 2008

Reverend Father, Mr. President and Members of the Board of Directors of the First Catholic Slovak Union of the United States and Canada:

It is my pleasure to present this report to you, the Board of Directors of the FCSU.

The Society enjoyed a net gain from operations and before capital losses of \$1,915,292 (+28.6%), despite an increase in dividends to members of \$152,100 (49.1%). The 2007 gain reflects the thirteenth profitable year in a row by the Society. Assets increased over \$6,300,000 (3.20%), while liabilities increased 2.6% and surplus increased 13.2%. The increase in surplus was primarily due to the operating profit plus release of AVR (asset evaluation reserve).

Realized capital losses (\$194,342) resulted from loss on defaulted bonds (\$151,302) and Common Stock (\$43,041). A portion of the realized gains were offset by unrealized gains of \$101,298 on bonds.

Life premium income showed an increase of 7.3% and annuity premiums increased 25.8%, while premium income increased 20.5%. Investment income was level despite the low interest rates currently available. Overall, total income for the year increased 7.7% offsetting the 14.40% decrease in 2006.

Our 2007 premium income is broken down as follows:

Life Insurance	\$ 1,455,579
Annuities	4,238,394
Total	\$ 5,693,973

Investment income for 2007 is broken down as follows.

Investment Income for 2007:

Government Bonds	\$ 2,604,373
Bonds	8,290,563
Preferred Stock	1,016,592
Common Stock	58,999
Common Stock Affiliates	200,000
Mortgage Loans	167,263
Real Estate	346,255

Certificate Loans	41,510
Short-Term Investments	261,399
Other Investment Assets	167,075
Write-ins for Investment Income	(642,865)
Total Investment Income	\$12,511,164

Investment Expenses:

Depreciation on Real Estate and Other Investment Expenses (Investment Taxes, License Fees, etc.)	\$ (446,964)
Net Investment Income	\$12,064,200

Listed below is a five-year comparison of assets, premium income and net income.

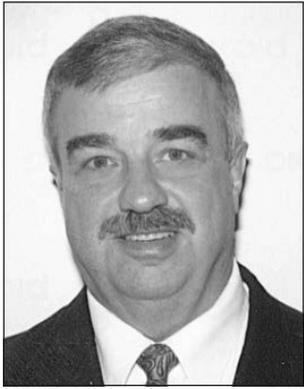
	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Assets	\$173,449,883	\$186,464,507	\$195,540,901	\$197,310,824	\$203,610,335
Prem. Income	18,030,652	11,507,748	7,596,237	4,725,837	5,693,973
Invest. Income	10,832,495	11,479,736	11,764,645	11,746,690	12,064,200
Net Gain	1,057,176	2,068,565	1,342,404	1,489,106	1,915,292

The FCSU Board of Directors declared a dividend to be paid in 2007 an increase of 25% from 2006.

Bonds constitute 86.2% (+3.0%) of the Society's assets, and have an average maturity of 15.82 years. The FCSU enjoys excellent bond quality, with 88.9% (+1.05%) of the bonds in the two highest NAIC rating classes. The value of non-investment grade bonds decreased by over \$2,200.00. Preferred Stocks now make up 5.5% (-4.0%) of invested assets. Common Stocks are 0.6% in an effort to diversify the portfolio and increase investment return. Other assets consist of mortgages 1.1%; real estate 1.4%; and all others 5.3%. The Society owns \$2,449,543 of surplus notes which are listed on Schedule BA and shown as other invested Assets on the Asset page. The Society's net investment rate of return was 6.37%, which is slightly lower than the five-year average of 6.42%, but excellent in the current market.

The most significant increases in liabilities were: life policy reserves increased 1.5%;

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Kenneth A. Arendt

Report of the Executive Secretary

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annuity reserves increased 2.6% and Funds held as trustee 54.2%. Average lapse ratio remains at a very favorable 1.9% over five years. The Society has limited foreign investments. The Foreign Exchange Reserve was increased to \$50,000 (+\$45,000).

Surplus grew 13.5% in a very solid gain. Surplus has increased 98.9% in the past five years.

The Society continues to emphasize Bonds and Preferred Stocks as its main investments and which constitute 92.2%

of its investment portfolio.

The AVR decreased by \$152,294 and is at its maximum in all components. The decrease in AVR was due to lower Preferred Stock owned and divesting over \$2,200,000 of non-investment grade bonds. Surplus increased 13.5%. The IMR increased 5.2% and now stands at \$3,726,188.

The combination of surplus, AVR and IMR total \$19,276,294, an increase of 9.0% over the same items in 2006. This represents very strong growth in the area of solvency.

The items which provide liquidity are \$7,383,627 of cash/short term funds, \$1,130,626 of Common Stock, almost \$1,900,000 of bonds maturing in less than one year, \$5,700,000 of premium income and over \$12,000,000 of investment income. Expected outgo for benefit payments, commissions, dividends and expenses is less than \$14,000,000. The Society has more than adequate liquidity as reflected by the \$5,700,000 of cash from operations in 2007.

The Risk Based Surplus calculations indicate that total adjusted surplus is \$15,750,106, which is almost \$2,700,000 above actual surplus. This does not include the IMR. The total for 50% of the calculated RBS was \$2,824,727 (after RBC Cash Flow Scenario testing which did not require an adjustment entry), which is substantially lower than actual surplus. The Society's RBS ratio of 557 is safely above regulatory action levels.

The Society has no IRIS ratios outside the NAIC designated ranges.

Total member benefits were 15.5% lower. Total life benefits were slightly lower; annuity benefits decreased by 19%. Annuity reserves increased 234% reflecting the increase in premium income and decrease in annuity benefits. Commissions were 139.5% higher reflecting the larger premium income; operation expenses were 9.4% lower, led by General Expenses, which were 11.6% lower, (2006 expenses included the cost of the quadrennial convention), but taxes were 2.3% higher. Management continues to control expenses. Dividends to members were increased by \$70,000 and reserves for subsequent year dividends were increased by \$80,000. The Society enjoyed a gain from operations for the 13th year in a row.

Bond capital losses were \$151,000 and the loss on the sale of common stock was \$43,041. Common Stock also had an unrealized loss of \$106,407. The Society has no bonds with an NAIC rating of "6". Bond unrealized capital gains were \$101,298.

Our 2007 financial statements, quarterly and year-end were compiled and completed on a timely basis and filed with the various states in which we are licensed to do business. We are continually in contact with the regulatory agencies of the various states regarding their requirements, which are constantly changing. We are in compliance with all of the states' and NAIC accounting regulations.

In 2007 we had a loss in membership (death claims, cash withdrawals, expels, etc.) of 1,057 members compared to a loss of 580 in 2006. We had a decrease in the number of life insurance certificates of 1,356 in 2007 compared to a loss of 1,063 in 2006.

The Society recorded a net \$176,000 increase in insurance in force. This represents stable growth. Insurance in force has increased 1.6% since 2003.

As of December 31, 2007, the Society had 3,865 annuity certificates, which represents a loss of 26 certificates. As of December 31, 2007, annuitant membership was increased by 50 members for a total of 1,291 annuitant members (this total does not reflect members who have both insurance and annuity contracts). The total cash value of our annuity accounts for 2007 was \$99,873,695 compared to \$97,451,383 in 2006. Our annuity products continue to be the bright spot in our portfolio, bringing in over \$66,000,000 in the last five years alone. This represents great confidence in our Society and its continued growth.

The First Catholic Slovak Union's insurance and annuity portfolio contains many products, which suit all insurance and annuity needs. The Membership and Marketing Committee, along with our actuarial firm, Bruce and Bruce Company, and our Financial Consulting Firm, Bruce and DePersis, continues to explore avenues to improve and enhance our existing products (premium costs, etc.) and develop new products for our members. We have expanded our marketing advertisements in our Jednota newspaper and in our mailings to our members.

In 2007 we continued to offer training seminars to our branches and districts. These seminars are designed to educate our branch officers, district officers and recommenders not only about our existing products but also our new products and ways to present them. We believe these seminars will help stimulate the growth of our Society, develop motivation and strengthen the relationship between the home office, our branches and recommenders. Our goal is to keep the lines of communication open among our branches, districts, recommenders and the home office. We encourage our district officers, branch officers and recommenders to personally discuss their thoughts and ideas with us.

The home office maintains a supply of sales tools, which aid our officers and recommenders with their presentation of our products. Some of these tools are sales kits, which contain information regarding our products (rates, application forms, etc.) and sales brochures describing our products. The 2001 Mortality Tables have also been incorporated into the sales kits. We still have available the pamphlet: What is the Jednota. This pamphlet gives a brief history of our Society. Our highly qualified home office staff is also available during

normal business hours to answer any questions concerning rates, completing applications, etc. To better serve our members and to increase efficiency, we offer an automatic premium payment service, which enables our members to have their premium payments automatically deducted from their bank accounts. Automatic deposit for annuity checks is also available to our annuity holders.

We continue to use, direct mail as a means of contacting our branches and our members, giving them information about our existing and new products. Direct mail is a necessary tool in marketing our products as we can reach a vast majority of our members in a short time. Our official organ, Jednota, is also a very useful vehicle for advertising our products. In 2008 our goal is to send the newspaper to every household to better inform our members about our products.

We are continually updating our computer system to ensure that it meets and exceeds all state and NAIC requirements and customizing and updating it to be more efficient and cost saving is an ongoing process.

The FCSU maintains its own web site (www.fcsu.com), which contains the history of our Society and information about our products. We are continuing to update our website so that when you visit it you will not only have the latest information regarding our insurance and annuity products but also information about what is going on in the FCSU (branch meetings, district meetings, etc.). The Jednota newspaper (English and Slovak sections) is now on our web page and for our member's convenience four back issues and the current issue are maintained on the web page at all times. The site contains links to Slovak news agencies, the Slovak Embassy and also to our Fraternal Activities Director's website. A new feature has been added to aid all members in receiving insurance quotes on line.

We have the capability of sending and receiving information from our members through our e-mail address, fcsu@aol.com. We encourage our members and officers to use e-mail when corresponding with the home office. In 2007 our annual statement was filed electronically with the NAIC. We have been filing electronically financial and various reports required by the states in which we are licensed.

We use the Internet daily to receive information from the Slovak Embassy and the Slovak News Agency. This information is used by our Slovak Editor to write articles about current events in Slovakia.

We are continually looking for ways to improve our home office operations. We believe a strong communication and working relationship between the home office, branches and recommenders is vital. Input from our members is necessary and very important to us. The home office always welcomes suggestions about ways to improve service to our members.

In 2007 our internal auditors and outside auditors, Hosack, Specht, Muetzel & Wood, conducted their audits for the period ending December 31, 2007. Their audits consisted of a complete review of our quarterly and year-end financial statements and our home office operations. As a result of these audits our Society received an excellent review.

During 2007, we continued merging inactive branches with active branches. This process will continue through 2008. This is an ongoing problem for our home office since many of our branch officers are unable to continue to service the members in their branches and not only is it difficult to find replacements for them within their branches, but it is also difficult to find other branches to merge them with.

The year 2007 was the ninth year that our branches had to meet the requirements set forth by the 46th and 48th Convention to qualify for the branch stipend. We encourage our branch officers that if they are unable to perform their duties and cannot find anyone in their branches to take over their duties, to call the home office. We will try to merge them with an active branch. For those branches that do not wish to merge, the home office can offer you guidelines as to how you can meet the requirements and receive the stipend. Beginning in 2007 there are new requirements to qualify for the branch stipend set forth by the 48th Quadrennial convention. They are as follows:

4.05 Financial Obligations

By the end of February of each year, the Home Office shall pay each local branch \$4.00 per member, per year, not to exceed \$8,000.00, provided the local branch has fulfilled the following requirements:

a) Published, announced and conducted two (2) semi-annual meetings, one (1) of which shall be an annual meeting held for the election of officers. Meeting attendance sheets shall accompany the reports submitted to the Executive Secretary.

b) Submitted an annual report to the Executive Secretary on a form provided by February 15th of the following year.

c) Submitted a financial report to the Executive Secretary on a form provided by February 15th of the following year.

d) Hosted, sponsored, promoted or attended at least one (1) fraternal activity in the past year.

e) Produced at least one (1) new contract in the previous calendar year. Branches with two hundred fifty (250) or more members must produce at least two (2) new contracts.

f) Provided the Home Office, on a continuing basis, current addresses of members and completed change of beneficiary forms, death reports and such other documents as required by the Home Office.

g) Sent a branch representative to attend at least one (1) district meeting per calendar year. Those in attendance at the district meeting may vote to provide a branch with an excused absence.

1. Members attending a district meeting shall sign an attendance sheet evidencing their presence at the event. The district shall notify the Executive Secretary of those branches failing to meet this attendance requirement of article "g" above by no later than February 15th of the following year.

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Andrew R. Harcar, Sr.

Report of the National Vice President

Reverend Father, President Rajec and member of the Board of Directors...

As always, I want to start off my report by thanking the Membership and Marketing Committee which is comprised of Brothers Andrew Rajec, Kenneth Arendt and George Matta, for all the time and effort they spend on the problems and solutions that concern membership and marketing. Each member is very concerned with the growth and success of our society.

Membership

As you will see by our annual statement, the First Catholic Slovak Union is financially strong. We had another good year. Now if we can get our members to increase their face value of life insurance everything would be great.

According to LIMRA (Life Insurance and Market Research Association) the average amount of life insurance coverage on insured individuals is \$146,300.00

We asked our National Secretary to give the Membership and Marketing Committee a breakdown of the actual count of members who had less than \$2,500.00 worth of life insurance.

The actual count, broken down by ages, was 32,482 members. Over half of our membership does NOT have enough insurance coverage to pay the cost of their burial.

The death of the principle wage earner could result in a significant social and economic crisis for the family. Unless adequate life insurance coverage is purchased, the children could go uneducated, the family home could be lost and the surviving spouse could face a lifetime of insecurity and lowered expectations.

The Membership and Marketing Committee will start a program in April where our members can increase their face value of insurance in part by using the cash value of their existing policy.

We will go over this and many other items when we get into the marketing segment of our board meeting.

Report of the Executive Secretary

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2. The Executive Secretary shall publish no later than March 31st of the following year in the Official Organ those branches failing to meet the requirement of section 4.05.

h) Maintained good standing within its district by paying current fiscal year dues and any other dues that may be outstanding from previous years.

The FCSU has an outstanding scholarship program, which is available to our members who meet the requirements. Members may contact the home office for information concerning the scholarship program. We continue to award 75 one-time scholarships each year to the highest ranking applicants.

The Jednota Benevolent Foundation, which is separate from the Society's scholarship program, is available to any person pursuing post-secondary education. To be eligible for this one-time scholarship, the applicant must be of Slovak descent and Catholic faith. At this time, ten non-renewable scholarships in the amount of \$500.00 each are expected to be awarded.

Our Society is very active in fraternal activities. We sponsor bowling and golf tournaments each year. A coloring contest for the younger members of our Society is held each December. Family picnics are now held on the District level and are more centrally located for our members. There were activities for the young and older members of the FCSU at the picnics. We hope to continue this practice annually. One of the activities that the FCSU takes part in each year is the March for Life, which is held in Washington, D.C. in January. Members of our Society join with all others who respect the rights of the unborn. We are exploring joint adventures with other fraternal societies in the near future.

As I have stated in the past, the economic success of our Society hinges on four factors: the effective sale and promoting of our insurance and annuity products to increase premium income; the effective management of our investment portfolio to increase our investment income; continuing to control our operating expenses; and also investigate new ways to attract new members. New members are vital to our growth.

As your Executive Secretary, I represent the FCSU on the Board of Directors of the Slovak Catholic Federation and the Slovak League. I have attended and represented the Society at fraternal functions not only within our FCSU but also other fraternal societies. I represent the society at various branch and district meetings throughout the year. Each year I attend the National Fraternal Congress of America's Annual Meeting. I also attend many seminars, including the Bruce and Bruce Seminars, which are always very informative regarding current insurance trends and pending state and NAIC regulations that might affect the FCSU.

This has been a very productive year; my family and I appreciate your trust and support as your Executive Secretary. I will continue to work and do my very best for our society. As we begin a new year and work toward a stronger society we need to respect each other and at all times to address all issues with honesty and integrity. We are the First Catholic Slovak Union and I pray that our Society continues to grow. We have outstanding products with competitive rates and we all need to be involved in reaching new members and promote our society.

In conclusion, I would like to thank all of my fellow officers and board members who assisted me throughout the year. A special thank you goes to our home office staff, a very hard-working entity of our Society.

Respectfully submitted,
Kenneth A. Arendt
Executive Secretary

Our existing sales force is doing an outstanding job for the First Catholic Slovak Union. The Membership and Marketing Committee would like to express their sincere thanks to those recommenders who consistently recommend new or increase business during our campaign.

Now for last years "Top Guns"... Our societies "Best of the Best."

Congratulations to the society's TOP 15 Producers by **Amount of Insurance Sold** for the 2007 Membership Campaign.

- | | |
|--------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Dorothy J. Petrus | 9. Audrey J. Balazik |
| 2. Frances Tarquinio | 10. Mary Ann Eckard |
| 3. George A. Sprock | 11. Joseph E. Rura |
| 4. Andrew R. Harcar, Sr. | 12. Margaret M. Perla |
| 5. Florence K. Matta | 13. Charles M. Terek |
| 6. Michael B. Lako | 14. Carl J. Ungvarsky |
| 7. James R. Marmol | 15. Grace Jewell Bacot |
| 8. Regis P. Brekosky | |

Congratulations to the society's TOP 15 Producers by **Amount of Annuity/IRA/Park Money** brought in for the 2007 campaign.

- | | |
|----------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Roger T. Soltis | 9. Florence K. Matta |
| 2. Thomas M. Hricik | 10. Theresa R. Chupka |
| 3. Mary Lou Krna | 11. Albert J. Savoiskis |
| 4. Michael E. Lako | 12. John S. Golias |
| 5. Shirley A. Kallok | 13. Rosemary Deliman |
| 6. Steven G. Luca | 14. Julius Paul Remenar |
| 7. George A. Sprock | 15. Kathleen M. Persun |
| 8. Edward Fibbi | |

Congratulations to the society's TOP 15 Insurance/Annuity Producers by **Total Points** for the 2007 membership campaign.

- | | |
|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Florence K. Matta | 9. Michael F. Lako |
| 2. Andrew R. Harcar, Sr. | 10. Audrey J. Balazik |
| 3. Dorothy J. Petrus | 11. Charles M. Terek |
| 4. Frances Tarquinio | 12. George J. Kacsanek |
| 5. Joseph F. Rura | 13. Mary Ann Eckard |
| 6. George A. Sprock | 14. Margaret Ann Bertovich |
| 7. Mary J. Kapitan | 15. Roger T. Soltis |
| 8. Lisa Ann Trifiletti-Palos | |

Congratulations to the society's TOP 15 Producers by the **Number of Policies Sold** for the 2007 campaign.

- | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Dorothy J. Petrus | 9. Charles M. Terek |
| 2. Frances Tarquinio | 10. Grace Jewell Bacot |
| 3. George A. Sprock | 11. Michael E. Lako |
| 4. Joseph E. Rura | 12. Dorothy A. Torretti |
| 5. Andrew R. Harcar, Sr. | 13. Rose A. Froncek |
| 6. Mary Ann Eckard | 14. James R. Marmol |
| 7. Florence K. Matta | 15. Margaret M. Perla |
| 8. Audrey J. Balazik | |

To each and everyone who signed a member and/or sent in an Annuity/IRA/Park Money contract for the year 2007. My heartfelt thanks and congratulations for a Job Well Done!

Marketing

This past year the Membership and Marketing Committee...

- Maintained the same interest rates on our annuities throughout the entire year. Our rates are now well above the banks, savings and loans and many fraternal societies.
- On March 25th - held a seminar for the St. John the Baptist Society, Branch 553 at the Slovak "J" Club in Akron, Ohio.
- On April 22nd - held a seminar at the Best Western in Sterling Heights, Michigan. Recommenders from the Michigan District and Rev. John J. Spitkovsky District were invited to attend.
- On April 28th - held a seminar at St. John the Baptist Slovak Church Hall, in Allentown, Pennsylvania. Recommenders from the Reverend Stephen Furdek District were invited to attend.
- On April 29th - held a seminar at Holy Family Church Hall in Scranton, Pennsylvania. Recommenders from the SS. Cyril and Methodius District were invited to attend.
- On May 5th - held a seminar at St. Mary's Nativity School Hall in Uniontown, Pennsylvania. Recommenders from the Msgr. Andrew Hlinka district, George Onda District, Frank T. Holly, Jr. District and the Rev. John Martvon District were invited to attend.
- On May 20th - held a seminar at the Slovak Hall in Westfield, Massachusetts. Members of St. Stephen's Society, Branch 890 attended the seminar. St. Stephen's Society is an insurance Fraternal Society which joined the First Catholic Slovak Union in 2003.
- Started the Juvenile Single Premium Program. It ran from June 1st through December. The program netted the First Catholic Slovak Union \$3,500 shy of 2 million dollars of face value whole life insurance and 250 new members.
- July 27th-August 3rd - The Membership and Marketing Committee of the First Catholic Slovak Union sponsored its 2007 membership meet aboard Royal Caribbean's "Vision of the Seas." Awards were given to Florence Matta and Andrew R. Harcar, Sr.
- The Membership and Marketing Committee always devotes a portion of the executive meetings, which are held every month, to marketing and membership retention.
- On September 2nd - in an effort to increase the visibility of the First Catholic Slovak Union, the FCSU had a booth at the annual Cleveland Slovak Radio Club Festival held at St.

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George F. Matta

Report of the National Treasurer

REVEREND FATHER, PRESIDENT RAJEC, AND BROTHERS AND SISTER OFFICERS:

I am pleased to report that all the financials and other reports as required by the various states where the First Catholic Slovak Union is licensed to do business have all been properly filed by March 1, 2008.

Overall, the First Catholic Slovak Union has had a successful year. Net investment income increased 2.7%, to a total of \$12,364,669.00 in 2007, despite the lower bond interest rate environment that continued and the subprime

mortgage problems. As a result of the Federal Reserve lowering the discount rates, currently at 3.5%, the supply of investment quality bonds with attractive interest rate available continues to be limited.

Net investment rate of return remained at a very respectable 6.37%. This return will continue to rank near the top among fraternal and commercial insurers. The Society's average investment return for the past five years in 6.42.

The Society continues to enjoy an increase in their Surplus.

Surplus 12-31-06 = \$11,555,594

Surplus 12-31-07 = \$13,112,264 An increase of \$1,557,670.00

BALANCE SHEET

	12-31-07		12-31-06	
Cash & Short Term Investments	\$ 12,472,896	6.13%	\$ 9,835,785	4.98%
Investment	173,196,904	86.02%	162,032,445	82.12%
Investment in stocks	12,152,666	5.96%	19,467,853	9.87%
Other Assets	5,832,769	2.86%	5,974,741	3.03%
Total	\$203,655,235	100.00%	\$197,310,824	100.00%

Bonds make up 88.2% of the investment portfolio and quality improved. Investment grade bonds are 88.8% of bonds owned and there are no bonds in the default category (class 6). All preferred stocks owned by the Society are in the top 3 NAIC investment rating grades.

Report of the National Vice President

continued from page 7

Anthony of Padua Church in Parma, Ohio. Copies of the Jednota newspaper and information on FCSU products were distributed to the attendees.

- On September 23rd - The Membership and Marketing Committee set up a booth at the New Jersey Slovak Festival. The festival was held at the New Jersey Arts Center in Holmdel, New Jersey. An estimated crowd of 10,000 people attended last year's event. Copies of the Jednota newspaper and information on FCSU products were distributed to the attendees.

- On October 1st - reintroduced our Senior Promotion Program. The Senior Promotion plan is directed to all current members between the ages of 55 and 80. Each member in this age group, subject to current reasonably good health, may purchase the amount of Whole Life Insurance that a \$200.00 annual premium will purchase, based on their current age. To help offset the cost for the first year, a special fraternal dividend equal to 50% of the first year premium, amounting to \$100.00 will be provided to each participating member. This program is available to March 31, 2008.

- On October 7th - held a seminar at the Grecian Inn in Brookfield, Wisconsin. Recommenders from the Rev. John J. Spitzkovsky District were invited to attend.

- On October 14th - held a seminar at Sacred Heart Church Hall in Carteret, New Jersey. Recommenders from the Rev. Matthew Jankola, Msgr. John E. Rura and Msgr. Stephen Krasula Districts were invited to attend.

- On October 27th - held a seminar at Rusty's Restaurant in Boardman, Ohio. Recommenders from the Rev. Joseph L. Kostik District were invited to attend.

- The Membership and Marketing Committee is currently working with our actuaries on new insurance and annuity programs.

Activities

Some of my activities in the year 2007 were: attended all monthly executive meetings as well as meetings called by the president. Letters concerning Marketing/Seminars were sent to the recommenders. Wrote articles pertaining to insurance and had them published in the Jednota. From April through December I sent the "Top Guns" to the printer. Attended various branch and district meetings and/or social functions. Am a director in the Illinois Fraternal Congress and attended their annual meeting at Starved Rock State Park Lodge in Utica, Illinois. I am a director in the Indiana Fraternal Congress and attended their annual meeting in Indianapolis, Indiana. I attended Midwest Slovak Pastoral Seminar in Homer Glen, Illinois. I attended the National Fraternal Congress meeting in Pittsburgh. Represented the society at Indiana Slovak Day in Merrillville, Indiana. I attended and chaired nine seminars in the states of Michigan, Wisconsin, Ohio, Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Massachusetts. Attended festivals and set up booths in Ohio and New Jersey. I inform all regional directors of their districts insurance and annuity production on a quarterly basis. I also chair the Membership and Marketing Committee.

At this time, I personally want to thank our executive committee and the board of directors for their help and encouragement. Many thanks to the branch and district officers for their untiring commitment to our society. Last, but not least, I want to express my sincerest thanks to our home office staff for the excellent help and cooperation given to me throughout the year.

Until next time.
Good Luck and God Bless
Andrew R. Harcar, Sr.

The Society enjoyed a very fine \$6,300,000 increase in assets, from \$197,310,824 to \$203,655,235. The continuing lower marketplace bond interest rates experienced throughout the year affected the market value of bonds and preferred stock plus the concerns of the subprime market crisis could cause interest rates to drop from previous levels. More recently, corporate bonds, when available, are offered at lower rates, while preferred stocks have been offered at unusually higher rates.

As usual, gains and losses from security transactions had minor impact on the Society's results. Capital losses (losses on actual sale) were experienced on bonds in the amount of \$151,302 due to the exchange of Delta Airlines bonds for stock. Delta was the only class 6 bond remaining in the portfolio. Losses on sale of common stocks were \$43,041.

The Society increased the foreign exchange reserves from \$5,000 to \$50,000 due to the purchase of Australian bonds. The society earned profits of \$485,848 on the sale of bonds and preferred stock that were deposited into the (IMR) Interest Maintenance Reserve, as required by regulations. Currently, the current total IMR is now \$3,726,188. A portion of which will provide average annual income to the Society of approximately \$185,000 for the next 20 years.

The year 2007 decrease in the Asset Value Reserve (AVR) was \$152,294 compared to 2006 of \$431,994 in 2006, a factor in the AVR is the downgrading of bonds now classified as non-investment grade bonds. All of the non-investment grade bonds are current on interest. Many of the non-investment grade bonds, including Ford Motor, Ford Motor Credit along with General Motors will mature within two or three years.

Although the Society primarily holds bonds for income and does not actively trade, the FCSU has on occasions accepted profitable offers that we felt would improve the Societies portfolio.

The Society purchased \$21,500,000 of securities in the year 2007, while almost \$18,100,000 of securities were matured, called or sold. The large volume of activity is a result of the large number of calls. The challenge continues to find replacement bonds of equal value and the best interest rates available. The large volume of trading is consistent with activity in this area since 2003.

INVESTMENT INCOME

INVESTMENT Income continues to provide the strength for the Society. Following is the investment income enjoyed during the past four years

2004	\$11,479,736
2005	12,055,609
2006	11,746,609
2007	12,364,669

PREMIUM INCOME

LIFE INSURANCE

2004	\$1,544,004.00
2005	1,292,597.00
2006	1,356,060.00
2007	1,455,479.00

ANNUITIES/IRA

2004	\$ 9,952,754.00
2005	6,303,640.00
2006	3,369,327.00
2007	4,238,394.00

TOTALS

2004	\$11,507,748.00
2005	7,596,237.00
2006	4,725,387.00
2007	5,693,973.00

As you can see, the above chart reflects a slight improvement in our insurance and annuity during the past year. We must concentrate more on improvements in both of these areas.

In conclusion, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Officers, Members of the Board of Directors for their assistance in the performance of their duties and their support to me as their treasurer.

Respectfully submitted,
George F. Matta
National Treasurer
March 12, 2008

NEWSPAPER DEADLINES

All copy is due by 4:30 P.M., THE MONDAY BEFORE THE ISSUE DATE, unless otherwise stated below because of special holiday scheduling. Copy that is not received by this deadline will not necessarily appear in the following Wednesday's issue.

Issue Date

WEDNESDAY, MAY 14
WEDNESDAY, MAY 28
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 11

Copy Deadline

MONDAY, MAY 5
MONDAY, MAY 19
MONDAY, JUNE 2

Correspondents who are announcing upcoming events should remember that the JEDNOTA is printed EVERY OTHER WEDNESDAY, and should take into account the extra time lost in the postal system. Therefore, please plan to have your announcements to us in ample time for them to be printed and received by the readership.

Send all copy (English AND Slovak) to:

Anthony Sutherland, Editor

"JEDNOTA"

1011 Rosedale Avenue, Middletown, PA 17057-4835

FAX: (717) 944-3107

MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

SATURDAY, MARCH 15, 2008

HOME OFFICE • INDEPENDENCE, OHIO

OPEN

President Andrew M. Rajec called the meeting to order at 3:20 PM. The President asked George Matta to open the meeting with prayer.

ROLL CALL

Members Attending: Andrew M. Rajec, President
Kenneth A. Arendt, Executive Secretary
Andrew R. Harcar, Sr., Vice President
George F. Matta, Treasurer

ACCEPTANCE OF THE FEBRUARY MEETING MINUTES

The Executive Secretary presented the minutes of the February 2008 Executive Committee meeting. A motion was made by George Matta and seconded by Andrew Harcar to accept the minutes as presented. Motion carried.

TREASURER'S STOCK AND BOND REPORT

Treasurer George Matta gave a detailed written report summarizing our investments for the month of February 2008 and answered the questions of the Executive Committee.

FEBRUARY 2008 TREASURER'S REPORT**MERRILL LYNCH**

A1/A MARSHAL & ILSLEY	6.20	02-28-28	100.00	6.20	500K
		CALLABLE 2-28-10			

WACHOVIA SECURITIES

A2/A NATIONAL CITY	5.25	12-15-16	91.68	6.50	500K
		NON CALL			

A2/A CIT GROUP	7.00	12-15-12	100.00	7.00	1MM
		NON CALL			

AAA/AAA FED HOME LOAN BANK	6.00	08-13-28	100.00	6.00	1MM
		CALLABLE 06-13-08			

AAA/AAA FED HOME LOAN BANK	6.00	08-13-28	100.00	6.00	500K
		CALLABLE 06-13-08			

SMITH BARNEY

Aaa/AAA AUSTRALIAN GOVT.	5.25	08-15-10	97.617	6.30	350K
		NON CALL EXCHANGE RATE \$0.922600			

A2/A BEAR STEARNS	7.40	02-15-18	100.00	7.40	1MM
		CALLABLE in 2010			

A3/BBB KEYCORP CAPITAL PFD	8.00	PFD	25.00	8.00	500K
		NON CALL 20,000 SHARES			

A2/A MERRILL LYNCH	6.05	5-16-16	99.75	6.087	500K
		NON CALL			

The Executive Committee also reviewed the quarterly statement presented by our custodian, Merrill Lynch.

A motion was made by Kenneth Arendt to accept the Treasurer's report as presented. Seconded by Andrew Harcar. Motion carried.

The Treasurer also led a discussion concerning our annuity interest rates for the second quarter of 2008. A motion was made by Kenneth Arendt and seconded by George Matta to accept the annuity rates for second quarter as follows:

Flexible Premium Deferred Annuity – 5 %

Park 2 Annuity – 4.5 %

Fixed Rate 6-year Annuity – 4.5 %. Motion carried.

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY'S REPORT**MORTGAGES AND OVERDUE MORTGAGES**

The Executive Secretary presented the report for the month of February for the Committee's review and answered their questions.

MONTHLY DISBURSEMENTS

Executive Secretary Arendt reported that the following disbursements were incurred and paid during the month of February:

Disbursements for the month of February 2008	
Death Benefits & Accumulations	\$277,224.98
Cash Withdrawals & Accumulations	\$ 45,208.02
Matured Endowments & Accumulations	\$ -0-
Trust Fund	\$ -0-

The Executive Secretary also presented the Membership and Annuity Report. The Executive Committee reviewed the rest of the disbursements and the Executive Secretary answered their questions.

MEMBERSHIP & MARKETING

The Vice President led a discussion reviewing our options for our upcoming Membership Meet. He stated that he will review the presented options with the travel agent and return to the Executive Committee with what the agent is able to offer. A final decision will be announced by mid-April in order to publicize the event as soon as possible.

ADJOURN

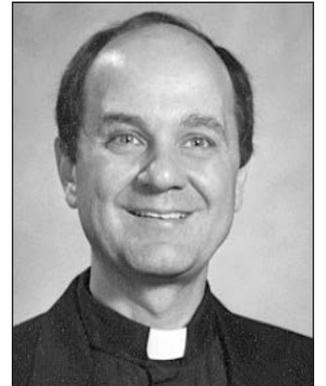
There being no further business to discuss, a motion was made by Kenneth Arendt to adjourn and seconded by Andrew Harcar. Motion carried.

The President asked Andrew Harcar to close the meeting with prayer.

Andrew M. Rajec
President

Kenneth A. Arendt
Executive Secretary

Report of the National Chaplain



Fr. Thomas A. Nasta

Dear Board of Directors and Members of the F.C.S.U.:
It is an honor to be your National Chaplain. I was happy to be present for and to participate in several events during the past year.

I was present for all four Board of Directors meetings that were held in 2007. I traveled to the two meetings held at the Home Office in Independence, OH and attended the other two by means of teleconference. I opened and closed each session with prayer. Mass was offered at the Board meetings held at the Home Office.

I drove to Buffalo, NY to participate in the annual Bowling Tournament I also offered Mass for all who attended.

In July I traveled to West Mifflin, PA for the 84th Annual Slovak Day in Kennywood Park sponsored by the Western Pennsylvania Slovak Day Association. I concelebrated the Mass at Kennywood for Slovak Day and left the next morning for Sandusky, OH and the annual Jednota Golf Tournament. I played in the tournament and celebrated Mass for those who attended.

As a member of the Executive Board of the Slovak Catholic Federation, I traveled to Danville, PA for a Board meeting and the pilgrimage sponsored by the Federation to the Basilica of SS. Cyril and Methodius. I concelebrated the Mass that concluded the pilgrimage.

I was privileged and honored to be a guest of the Slovak Catholic Sokol and the First Catholic Slovak Ladies Association at their respective conventions.

In November I was a concelebrant of a Mass which commemorated the 100th anniversary of St Agnes-St. John Nepomocene parish in Philadelphia, the only personal parish in the city of Philadelphia for Slovaks Catholics. At the reception following the Mass, I presented a resolution of congratulations from our Board of Directors to the parish community.

Throughout the year I have written articles that were published in our fraternal's newspaper and have answered correspondence that was sent to me.

The year 2007 was a special year of grace for all of us. May our Lord continue to bless us in our journey to Him.

Fraternally,
Fr. Thomas A. Nasta
National Chaplain

Apostleship of Prayer

continued from page 4

She also shows us the role of prayer in evangelization. People are not converted except by the Holy Spirit. So the best way to support missionaries is to pray that the Holy Spirit will convert people to believe in Jesus and come into the Church. Ideally, missionaries, indispensable to evangelization, become vehicles of the grace of God, just like Mary.

Prayer for missionaries lies at the origin of the Apostleship of Prayer. In 1844 a group of Jesuit seminarians complained to their spiritual director about having to wait to be missionaries. Fr. Francis Gautrelet told them: "Be apostles now, apostles of prayer! Offer everything you are doing each day in union with the Heart of our Lord for what He wishes, the spread of the Kingdom for the salvation of souls."

You and I are privileged to serve the world and the Church, to join in prayer with Mary, our Mother, and the Mother of the Church. This is the heart of our daily offering.

Reflection

How does your daily offering work to bring the Holy Spirit into the lives of others?

VISIT THE
FCSU'S WEBSITE

Home page at:
<http://www.fcsu.com>

Send e-mail to the FCSU at the
following address:
fcsu@aol.com



FROM THE OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY:

As of April 1, 2008 pursuant to the bylaws section 4.05 Financial Obligations, the following branches have not met all the requirements to receive their branch stipend. If any branch officer feels there is a discrepancy please contact the home office immediately at 1-800-533-6682.

List of branches that did not qualify for a branch stipend:

REGION 1

<u>District 1</u>	<u>District 4</u>	<u>District 16</u>
Br. 053 K	Br. 032 K	Br. 082 K
Br. 098 K	Br. 102 K	Br. 339 K
Br. 517 K	Br. 121 K	Br. 340 K
Br. 661 K	Br. 132 K	
Br. 725 K	Br. 168 K	
Br. 890 K	Br. 201 K	

Br. 324 K

Br. 381 K

Br. 652 K

REGION 2

<u>District 8</u>	<u>District 8</u>	<u>District 8</u>
Br. 018 K	Br. 131 P	Br. 270 K
Br. 040 P	Br. 136 K	Br. 294 K
Br. 051 P	Br. 144 P	Br. 326 K
Br. 061 K	Br. 156 K	Br. 327 K
Br. 064 K	Br. 157 K	Br. 332 K
Br. 075 K	Br. 215 K	Br. 335 K
Br. 114 K	Br. 226 P	Br. 505 K
Br. 116 P	Br. 659 K	Br. 775 K
	Br. 779 K	

REGION 3

<u>District 17</u>	<u>District 17</u>
Br. 016 P	Br. 240 P
Br. 152 K	Br. 263 K
Br. 237 P	Br. 356 P
Br. 238 K	Br. 368 K
Br. 240 K	Br. 461 K

REGION 4

<u>District 3</u>	<u>District 7</u>	<u>District 9</u>	<u>District 12</u>	<u>District 13</u>
Br. 086 K	Br. 096 K	Br. 108 K	Br. 565 K	Br. 149 K
Br. 122 K	Br. 321 P	Br. 323 K	Br. 851 K	Br. 198 P
Br. 211 K	Br. 549 K	Br. 826 K		Br. 233 K
Br. 388 K	Br. 571 K	Br. 835 K		Br. 299 K
	Br. 577 K			Br. 322 K
	Br. 604 K			Br. 417 K
				Br. 667 K

REGION 5

<u>District 6</u>	<u>District 6</u>	<u>District 11</u>	<u>District 11</u>
Br. 004 K	Br. 487 K	Br. 164 K	Br. 701 K
Br. 254 K	Br. 618 K	Br. 200 K	Br. 831 K
Br. 315 K	Br. 644 K	Br. 401 K	
Br. 454 K	Br. 704 K	Br. 429 K	
Br. 465 K	Br. 733 K	Br. 600 K	

REGION 6

<u>District 10</u>	<u>District 14</u>	<u>District 18</u>	<u>District 18</u>
Br. 319 K	Br. 165 K	Br. 114 P	Br. 741 k
Br. 714 K	Br. 342 P	Br. 348 K	Br. 888 K
Br. 754 K	Br. 759 K	Br. 362 K	
Br. 862 K		Br. 472 K	

REGION 7

<u>District 2</u>	<u>District 2</u>	<u>District 5</u>	<u>District 5</u>	<u>District 15</u>
Br. 083 K	Br. 591 K	Br. 221 K	Br. 748 K	Br. 028 K
Br. 089 K	Br. 624 K	Br. 332 P	Br. 756 K	Br. 100 K
Br. 163 K	Br. 686 K	Br. 595 K	Br. 774 K	Br. 109 K
Br. 224 K	Br. 703 K	Br. 615 K	Br. 780 K	Br. 128 K
Br. 358 K	Br. 717 K	Br. 633 K	Br. 788 K	Br. 226 K
Br. 480 K	Br. 718 K	Br. 721 K		Br. 296 K
Br. 510 K	Br. 729 K	Br. 743 K		Br. 330 K
Br. 543 K	Br. 762 K			Br. 403 K
Br. 586 K				Br. 404 K
				Br. 407 K
				Br. 700 K
				Br. 702 K
				Br. 735 K
				Br. 844 K

Joseph T. Senko Honored

continued from page 1

Slovak American life. He is a longtime member of Branch 254 of the First Catholic Slovak Union in Pittsburgh and past FCSU Chairman of Auditors. He is Chairman and Treasurer of the Friends of Slovakia, the Executive Director of Western Pennsylvania Slovak Cultural Association, and the Slovak Honorary Consul for Pennsylvania. Joe has been recognized for his volunteer work with numerous non-profit organizations, especially those which have helped the Slovak community in both the United States and in Slovakia.

A native of Pittsburgh, Joseph Senko was born in 1935. He graduated from Central Catholic High School in Pittsburgh in 1953. He received a Bachelors Degree from Duquesne University and a Masters Degree from Robert Morris University. Following his studies in accounting, he worked for the Internal Revenue Service, then with an international accounting firm, which he owned for 29 years. He is now associated with the public accounting firm of McKeever, Varga & Senko. Over the years he has received numerous awards in the accounting profession. He is married to Albina Senko, a native of Slovakia. The couple has six children and seven grandchildren.

The Fraternal Societies of Greater Pittsburgh has been serving the Western Pennsylvania fraternal community for 65 years. Its mission is to strengthen and promote the fraternal movement. Through monthly meetings, FSGP strives to keep its member abreast of the issues and concerns affecting fraternal business.



Nina Holy Honored in Slovakia

On the occasion of the 15th anniversary of the Slovakia's independence, President Ivan Gasparovic honored 22 people in Bratislava for their promotion of Slovak culture. Among the recipients was Mrs. Nina Holy of West Orange, New Jersey.

Nina Holy received The Prince Pribina Cross during the impressive ceremony in the presidential palace in Bratislava.

Nina Holy was born in New York City. When she was two years old, Nina returned with her family to Slovakia. She attended grammar school in Koseca near Trencin and started Middle school in Ilava. In early 1948 at age 15, she returned to New York City to live with relatives and there completed her high school studies. She continued her studies at Fairleigh Dickinson University where she received a degree in accounting. She became a professional accountant and later an auditor. She worked as an auditor for the U.S. Army and later for the U.S. Navy.

Nina's activity in Slovak life began in the late 1940s. She became a member of several organizations at St. John Nepomucene Parish in New York City. She was a performer in many Slovak plays in the New York area. She was active in the Slovak American Club in New York and was a founder of the Slovak World Congress. For eight years, she was a member of the Ethnic Advisory Council for Governor Whitman in New Jersey. For almost 30 years she has been very active in the New Jersey Heritage Festival held each year in September. For the past 10 years, she has served as co-chairperson of this popular festival. Presently, she is serving as secretary of the Slovak League of America.

Nina is also active in Slovak fraternal life. She holds membership in several Slovak fraternal organizations. She is a member of Jednota Branch 716 in New York City.



Annual Pittsburgh International Folk Festival, May 16, 17, 18

The Pittsburgh Slovaks and Junior Pittsburgh Slovaks will represent the Slovaks at the 52nd Annual Pittsburgh International Folk Festival, May 16, 17, 18, to be held at the David L. Lawrence Convention Center in downtown Pittsburgh. Throughout the weekend festival goers will have the opportunity to experience the foods, traditional music & dance, cultural exhibits, folk crafts, global marketplace and Ethnic Cooking Demonstrations from more than thirty nationalities. The Pittsburgh Slovaks will perform Friday evening, May 16th, while the Junior Pittsburgh Slovaks will participate in the Children's Matinee on Saturday, May 17th.

In the Global Marketplace shop for the finest Slovak crystal, glass and jewelry at LaBoheme, or stop by the Slovak Folk Crafts display and choose from an array of various handcrafted Slovak items.

The Slovak kitchen will be serving, Chicken Paprikaš, Pork & Sauerkraut, Mushroom Soup, Halušky, and Palacinky with fruit fillings. If you have a sweet tooth listen to this—stop by and choose from our array of baked goods. Get them while they last. Festival times are: Friday 4 – 10 p.m.; Sat. Noon – 10, and Sunday Noon – 6. Tickets are \$ 8.00 each if you order them in advance. Call (412) 421-1204 and reserve your tickets today. Admission price at the gate is \$10.00, so the best deal is to buy them in advance. We'll be looking for you!

Coming Events 

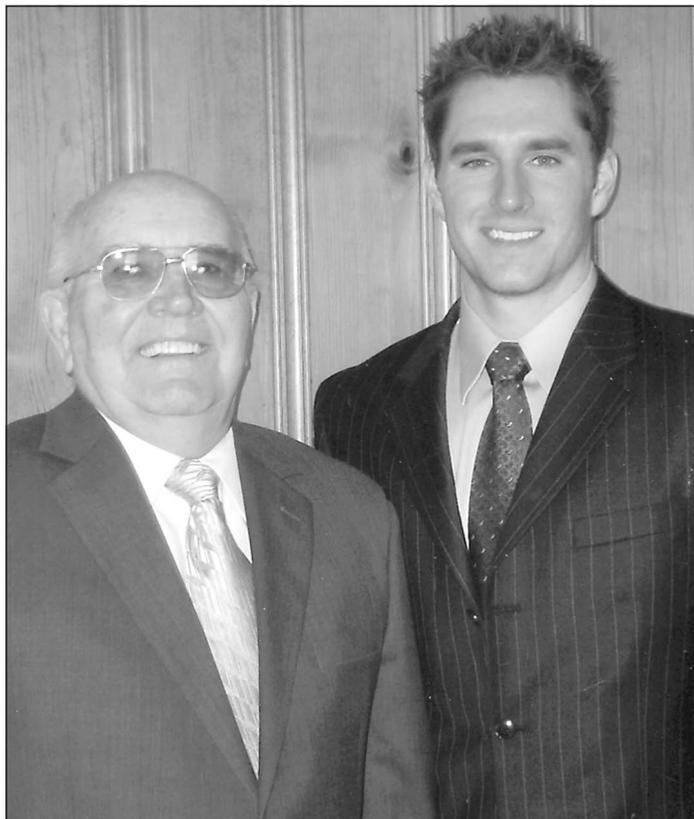
JUNE

- 1 – The Msgr. Stephen Krasula District's Semiannual Meeting at 1:00 p.m. in St. John Nepomucene Church Parish Hall, 411 East 66th Street, New York City.
- 8 – The Frank T. Holly Jr. District's Semiannual Meeting at 1:00 p.m. in the third floor meeting room at the Meridian Point Apartments, 112 Confer Vista Road, Uniontown, Pennsylvania.

YOUTH

ROUND-UP

Jonathan David Taylor, a member of Branch 181, United, Pennsylvania and a 2004 Jednota Scholarship recipient, graduated from the University of Pittsburgh main campus, on April 27, 2008. He graduated Magna Cum Laude with a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science with Honors, a Minor in Economics and a Certificate in Leadership. He will be attending Law School at Nova Southwestern University (NSU) in Fort Lauderdale, Florida this fall. He was selected a 2008 Goodwin Scholar, the highest scholarship honor at NSU, receiving full tuition for all 3 years of Law School.



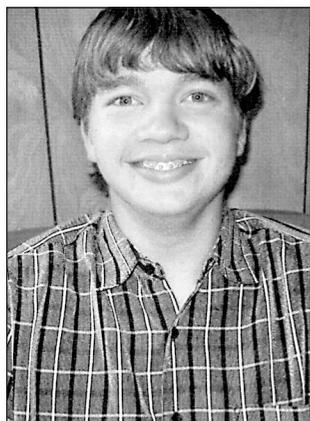
Jonathan Taylor with his grandfather, Joseph Burik, former president of Branch 181.

While attending the University of Pittsburgh College of Arts and Science/Honors College, Jonathan was a member of the Phi Eta Sigma National Honor Society, the Golden Key International Honor Society, the National Association of Collegiate Scholars, the National Scholar Honor Society, the National Dean's List, The University of Pittsburgh's Dean List, and was recently inducted into Phi Beta Kappa Honor Society. He was a 2-time recipient of the Sam and Sophia Zacharias Scholarship and the Leonard Edward Schwartz Prize for outstanding academic achievement. He was a facilitator for Emerging Leaders Program at Pitt, was a participant in the Panther Leadership Summit and was elected floor representative for the Resident Student Association. He also volunteered for the Community Human Service after School Program tutoring elementary students. Jonathan participated in Pitt's intramural soccer and football leagues. He is a member of Our Lady of Grace Roman Catholic Church in Greensburg where he was an altar server and a 2004 Honors graduate from Hempfield Area High School.

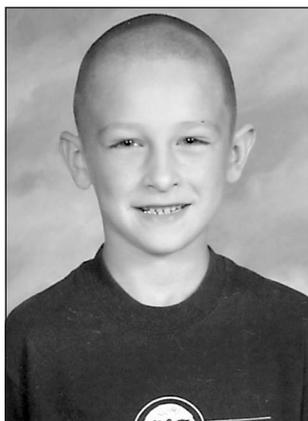
He is the son of David and Chris Anne (Burik) Taylor of Greensburg and the grandson of former Branch 181 President, Joseph S. Burik and his wife, Mary of Mt. Pleasant, Pennsylvania.



Jonathan Wilhelm



Heath Wilhelm



Kelton Kirk

Easter Sunday, March 23, 2008, was a memorable date for three grandchildren of Veronica Wilhelm, a member of Branch 853, Ellsworth, Pennsylvania. On that day, Heath Wilhelm, Jonathan Wilhelm and Kelton Kirk, all of Amarillo, Texas, celebrated their birthdays. This was the first time their birthday on March 23 were on Easter and not during Lent.

Heath Wilhelm, a sophomore at Randall High School, has traveled to Arkansas, New York and London, England to sing with the Amarillo Boys Choir. Recently he bought a pickup truck. He enjoys repairing engines, hunting and skiing. He also helps his dad on the farm. Jonathan Wilhelm is a straight "A" grade student in the seventh grade at Westover Middle School. He made the All-Region band and choir. He enjoys helping his dad with carpentry and breaking up concrete with a jackhammer. He also likes to Trikke. Kelton Kirk is six years old and in the first grade.

John's Tour of Slovakia Planned for September 10-27, 2008

John Mago of John's Tours will conduct his annual tour of Slovakia and surrounding countries September 10-27, 2008. The itinerary includes Vienna, Budapest, Prague, Krakow, Wieliczka Salt Mine, Auschwitz, and Wadowice, birthplace of Pope John Paul II.

In Slovakia, the tour will visit Bratislava, Trnava, Nitra, Piešťany, Martin, High Tatras, Banská Bystrica, Banská Štiavnica, Košice, Bardejov and Prešov. Tourists will see a folklore wedding in Krakovany, the Slovak National Museum in Martin, St. James Church in Levoca, Spis Castle, Goral museum in Zdiar, and a cultural performance in Tichý Potok. No visit to Slovakia is complete without a wooden raft ride down the Dunajec River. Tour participants will also have the opportunity to invite friends and relatives to the cultural performances, at their own expense. The tour includes 16 nights lodging in first class hotels, an air-conditioned bus for touring, and English speaking guide, two meals a day, and airfare from Pittsburgh. Airfare from other cities is also available.

John Mago along with the Slovak guide will help make arrangements for transportation and a translator for anyone wishing to contact relatives in Slovakia.

For a brochure with further information contact John's Tours, P.O. Box 154, Vandergrift, PA 15690, Phone: 1-800-260-8687 or 724-567-7341.



Western Pennsylvania Radio Hour

The Western Pennsylvania Slovak Radio Hour can now be heard around the world! The station has set up a live direct feed of all the programs on WPIT AM to the internet. So, anyone who subscribes to the internet- can listen to the Western Pennsylvania Slovak Radio Hour LIVE! To listen over the internet log on to HYPERLINK "http://www.wpitam.com--" www.wpitam.com-- at 3 pm EASTERN STANDARD TIME, and look for "Listen Live" in the box at the top of the page. You should see Slovak Radio Hour, click on it. And that's all there is to it. We are looking forward to hearing from our "cyberspace listeners".

Since 1979, Rudy & Sue Ondrejco, hosts of the Western Pennsylvania Slovak Radio Hour have been providing a wonderfully entertaining program. Each week listeners tune in to hear Slovak music and songs, and news and announcements affecting the Tri-State area as well as Slovakia.

FIRST CATHOLIC SLOVAK UNION ANNOUNCING AVOID STOCK MARKET VOLATILITY The FIXED RATE 6-YEAR* ANNUITY

4.50%

(APR 4.402%)

*Interest rate Guaranteed for 6 years
RATE EFFECTIVE UNTIL 6/30/2008

Our FIXED RATE 6-YEAR annuity offers you the following benefits:

- A much higher interest rate than other current low rates available
- Rate is guaranteed for 6 years. No interest rate fluctuation or changes
- The power of annuity tax deferral
- A safe, secure and competitive investment for your retirement (IRA) funds
- Opportunity to lock-in a competitive rate for 6 years and avoid the turmoil of stock market volatility

The FIXED RATE 6-YEAR annuity has the following features and terms:

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BRANCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

Branch 1 — CLEVELAND, OHIO

The St. Joseph Society, Branch 1, will hold its next meeting on Tuesday, June 10, 2008, at 7:00 p.m. at SS. Cyril and Methodius Hall, 12608 Madison Avenue, Lakewood, Ohio. All are welcome. Please attend. Come and meet the members.

Mary Dubber, Secretary

Branch 55 — PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA

The St. Joseph Society, Branch 55, will hold its Semiannual Meeting on Sunday, May 4, 2008, after the 10:30 a.m. Mass at St. Agnes/St. John Nepomucene Church Hall, 319 Brown Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. On the agenda will be a discussion of branch activities, all reports, and general branch business. Refreshments will be served.

We continue to collect aluminum cans to help a neighbor whose husband has M.S. Also, please bring canned and dry goods for the benefit of Aid for Friends and clothing items for St. Benedict Thrift Shop.

Helene T. Gaydos, President

Branch 60 — MCKEESPORT, PENNSYLVANIA

The Holy Trinity Society, Branch 60, will hold its Semiannual Meeting on Sunday, May 4, 2008, at 1:00 p.m. at the home of President Ann Wargovich, 58 Lilmont Avenue, Swissvale, Pennsylvania. On the agenda will be the officers' reports and a discussion of branch activities. All members are urged to attend.

Margaret M. Perla, Secretary

Branch 61 — BALTIMORE, MARYLAND

The St. Stephen the King Society, Branch 61, will hold its Semiannual Meeting on Thursday, May 29, 2008, at 7:00 p.m. at the home of the president, Victor Sabo, 6802 Roberts Avenue, Baltimore, Maryland. Matters of importance to our branch and all fraternal activity will be on the agenda. All members are urged to attend.

Victor Sabo, President

Branch 173 — GREATER WILKES-BARRE-WYOMING VALLEY, PENNSYLVANIA

The St. John the Baptist Society, Branch 173, located in the Wilkes-Barre and surrounding areas, will have its annual Mass for the living and deceased members of Branch 173 on Sunday, June 1, 2008, at 10:30 a.m. at The Catholic Community of North Wilkes-Barre Church (formerly the Sacred Heart Slovak Church), North Main Street, Wilkes-Barre. The semiannual meeting will be held after the liturgy at approximately 12:00 noon at Norm's, North Sherman Street, in Wilkes-Barre. If you plan to attend, please notify Dorothy A. Ungvarsky at 570/403-2067 no later than May 26 so arrangements can be made.

Dorothy A. Ungvarsky, President



Branch 199 — HOSTETTER, PENNSYLVANIA

The Holy Trinity Society, Branch 199, will hold its Semiannual Meeting on Sunday, June 8, 2008, at 1:00 p.m. at the home of Francis Pipak. On the agenda will be a discussion of life insurance and annuities.

Sophie Pipak, Financial Secretary

Branch 278 — MIDDLETOWN, PENNSYLVANIA

The St. Peter Society, Branch 278, will hold its next meeting on Monday, May 19, 2008, at 1:00 p.m. at Seven Sorrows Church, Middletown, Pennsylvania. All members are welcome to attend.

Andrew Trojcek, President

Branch 293 — LANSFORD, PENNSYLVANIA

The St. Joseph Society, Branch 293, will hold its Semiannual Meeting on Sunday, June 8, 2008, at 1:00 p.m. at St. Michael's Church Social Hall, 124 East Abbott Street, Lansford, Pennsylvania.

Anyone needing insurance or service should contact Robert J. Lakata, 527 E. Bertsch St., Lansford, PA 18232. Phone: 570/645-4872.

Robert J. Lakata

Branch 367 — FAIRCHANCE, PENNSYLVANIA

The St. Joseph Society, branch 367, will hold its next regular meeting on Tuesday, May 6, 2008, at 4:00 p.m. at Meloni's restaurant, Uniontown, Pennsylvania. All members are welcome to attend.

Jane Kish, Secretary

Branch 600 — LEECHBURG, PENNSYLVANIA

The St. Mary's Society, Branch 600, will hold its half-year meeting on Sunday, May 18, 2008, at 1:00 p.m. at John's Tours Office, Route 66 in the Village of Riverview. All members are invited to attend.

John Mago, Financial Secretary

Branch 731 — YOUNGSTOWN, OHIO

The St. Joseph Society, Branch 731, will have a meeting on Sunday, May 18, 2008, at 12:30 p.m. at St. Matthias Church, Cornell Street, Youngstown, Ohio. We will be planning summer events at this meeting. Please attend to be included in these activities.

James Bobby, Recording Secretary

Branch 844 — LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

The St. Joseph the Guardian Society, Branch 844, will hold its Annual Father's Day Mass on Sunday, June 15, 2008, at St. John Bosco High School, 13640 Bellflower Boulevard, Bellflower, California. Mass will begin at 11:00 a.m. A delicious, authentic Slovak lunch will be served after the liturgy. Come and join us in celebrating the Slovak spirit of Father's Day.

Following the festivities, Branch 844 members will conduct a meeting to review officers' report and to discuss branch activities.

We hope to see you all there. We wish all the fathers a very special and safe Father's Day.

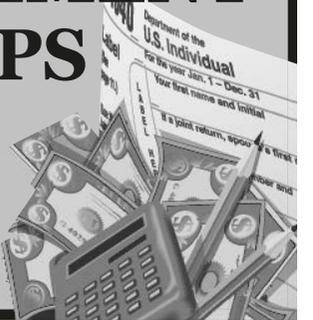
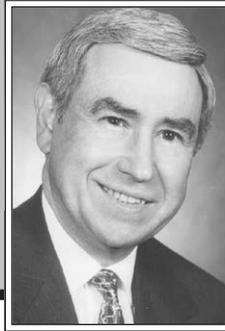
Milan Konkol, Secretary

MONEY MANAGEMENT

& TAX TIPS

By Joseph T. Senko

*Certified Public Accountant
Certified Financial Planner
Personal Financial Specialist
(AICPA)*



Is Your Home Adequately Insured?

A home and its contents are the most valuable assets for most people. Be sure you have sufficient homeowner's insurance to protect them. Now may be time to reexamine your coverage if you have not done so recently. This is particularly true if real estate values have risen in your area or if you've made major home improvements.

Review Your Policy

When a disaster occurs, homeowners often find that their insurance coverage isn't adequate to cover all their costs. To ensure that doesn't happen, review your policy when it comes up for renewal, after a major addition or renovation, or when you've installed a new burglar or fire alarm system. You should also do so after a life change, such as marriage or divorce, or when the contents of your home may change.

Picking the Policy

CPAs recommend that you consider what kind of repayment you want to receive for damages. A cost-value policy will reimburse you for the price you paid for an item. The insurance company, however, will depreciate that price based on the age and condition of the item, which means you'll likely receive less than you need to buy a replacement. Replacement cost coverage is more expensive than a cost-value policy, but it will provide the amount you need for repairs or replacement. A guaranteed or extended replacement cost policy pays whatever is necessary to rebuild a home as it was before a disaster, even if that amount is more than the policy limit. Insurance companies may place limitations on any policy, so find out precisely what your policy promises. Remember, if you live in a flood zone or in an area subject to frequent hurricanes, the cost to cover these catastrophes may be more.

Create an Inventory

Having both written and photographic inventories of the contents of your home will help you back up your insurance claims if disaster strikes. They should include all home contents—furniture, electronics, artwork, and collectibles—along with estimated replacement values. Ask the insurance company if you need a separate rider for valuables such as jewelry, art antiques, and computers.

Make sure the insurance company is aware of new additions or renovations to your home that expand the square footage or raise the value of the property. Also, make sure your policy reflects overall changes in real estate values in your area. The same is true of any possessions whose value may have increased since they were first insured. You may need to call in an appraiser to determine the current worth of your home or its contents in order to change your policy.

To speed the process after a disaster, make sure your policy, insurance company contact information, and written and photographic inventory of the contents of your home are readily available. Keep them in a secure spot away from your home, such as a safe deposit box or with a relative who lives nearby.

Shop Wisely

Don't hesitate to shop around for the best rates. Adequate insurance is important, but you may be able to find a better deal for the same amount of coverage. However, make sure the insurer you are considering has been given a good rating by agencies such as A.M. Best or Standard & Poor's or by a consumer watchdog, such as Consumer Reports.

DISTRICT ANNOUNCEMENTS

MSGR. STEPHEN KRASULA DISTRICT — New York

The Msgr. Stephen Krasula District will hold its Semiannual Meeting on Sunday, June 1, 2008, at 1:00 p.m. in St. John Nepomucene Church Parish Hall, 411 East 66th Street, New York City. We urge all District branches to send their representatives to this meeting. All FCSU members are also welcome to attend. The St. Matthew Society, Branch 45, will serve the refreshments.

Henrieta H. Daitova, Secretary

FRANK T. HOLLY JR. DISTRICT — Uniontown, Pennsylvania

The Frank T. Holly Jr. District will hold its Semiannual Meeting on Sunday, June 8, 2008, at 1:00 p.m. in the third floor meeting room at the Meridian Point Apartments, 112 Confer Vista Road, Uniontown, Pennsylvania. Members of the District branches are invited to attend this meeting.

Barbara Ann Holly, Secretary

REV. JOSEPH L. KOSTIK DISTRICT — Youngstown, Ohio

The Rev. Joseph L. Kostik District will have its next meeting on Tuesday, May 20, 2008, at 7:00 p.m. at St. Matthias Church Rectory, Youngstown, Ohio.

Carlie Peshek, President

REMEMBER OUR DEPARTED MEMBERS AND FRIENDS

Mary A. Lorinc Branch 185

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Mary A. Lorinc, known to her family as "Baba", died March 5, 2009. She was a member of Branch 185 along with many members of the family.

Three weeks prior to her passing, Mrs. Lorinc was diagnosed with cancer. To the end she maintained her sense of dignity, humor and resolve. She spent the final week of her life at her home of 50 years surrounded by family and friends. What a blessing that last week was for all of us.



Mary A. Lorinc

Mrs. Lorinc was born in Youngstown, Ohio in 1916 but returned to her family's village in Slovakia when she was still a young child. She married at age 16 and at the age of 18, bore her first child, a son, Michael. She was a strong and determined woman. She returned to America shortly following Michael's first birthday in order to keep her citizenship in the United States. One and a half year later, she was able to send for her husband and child. She eventually had five more children: Stephen, Mary Ann, John, Helen and Joseph.

Mary Lorinc and her husband of almost 50 years, the late Stefan Lorinc, strived to provide for their family in Pittsburgh. They were avid gardeners and hard workers, but perhaps most importantly, was their commitment to God and tradition. Holidays were filled with Slovak foods, music, prayer and customs. The traditional soups for Christmas Eve were always prepared and during the Easter season the grandchildren and great-grandchildren participated in the traditional waxing and coloring of eggs or pysanky.

Stefan Lorinc or Dzedeo was known to play tunes on his harmonica while bouncing his grandchildren on his knees. Baba loved to sing old Slovak songs to Dzedeo's music and would take her grandchildren by the hand as she led them in traditional Slovak dance. Baba worked hard to instill family traditions and recipes and her grandchildren are known to make excellent pirohy and holubky.

Mrs. Lorinc was avid traveler who returned to Europe several times. She traveled to the Holy Land to follow the path of Jesus and was able to ride a camel in the process. She also traveled frequently throughout the United States and would often remark that she was grateful for the opportunity to have traveled.

For many years Mary Lorinc and her children and their families gathered at her home on Harbison Street for weekly Sunday soup. Eventually, the gathered group took on the name of The Soup Club and began to alternate homes for soup. Most importantly, however, was not the location of the home, but the fact that the family was together. Even after her and Dzedeo's death, this tradition has continued, and we know they would be pleased.

Baba loved to laugh and to share the gift of laughter. She had a beautiful smile.

She was an active member of the Christian Mother's Guild, an officer of the LPSCU, and a choir member of the former St. Gabriel the Archangel Slovak Catholic Church in Pittsburgh. She was also a member of the Sunshine Girls, a group of friends from church who put on little plays depicting traditions of life in the small villages in eastern Slovakia. Regardless of the theme, you could always count on there being plenty of songs and laughter.

During her viewing, stories and photos were exchanged. Baba brought laughter to many people. She always brought people together and her funeral was no exception. Old stories were retold and relationships rekindled. The heartfelt eulogy offered by her only granddaughter and great grandson touched more hearts than we'll ever know. Baba, we miss you, but your spirit lives on.

Michael P. Kochis Branch 580 West Mifflin, Pennsylvania

Michael P. Kochis, 87, of West Mifflin, Pennsylvania and a member of Branch 580, died Monday, March 10, 2008. He was the husband of the late Agnes (Rusbarsky) Kochis. He was the son of the late Michael and Anna (Kertis) Kochis.

Mr. Kochis served in the Army during World War II and received a Bronze Star Medal for bravery. He retired from U.S. Steel Homestead Works, and he belonged to Resurrection Church, West Mifflin, where he was a Eucharistic Minister for many years. He was also in charge of St. Vincent DePaul Society and a member of Knights of Columbus.

He is survived by children, James Kochis, Michael (Janice) Kochis, Lawrence Kochis, Barbara (Timothy) Salopek, Robert Kochis and Donna Kochis; grandchildren, Nicholas, Chad, Shawn, Tina and Noah; brother, Raymond Kochis; sister-in-law, Audrey Kochis, and Clarence (Lou) Rusbarsky. He was predeceased by brothers, Edward Kochis and Alexander Kochis.

Friends were received at the Savolskis-Wasik-Glenn Funeral Home, Munhall. A Funeral Mass was celebrated in Resurrection Church. Memorial donations may be made to: Resurrection Church, 3909 Donna Ave., West Mifflin, PA 15122.

The officers and members of Branch 580 express their deepest sympathy to his family. May he rest in peace. The officers of Branch 580 will have a Mass offered for Michael.

Mary G. Perun

Sister M. Virginia, SS.C.M.

Sister M. Virginia (Irene T. Baloga) died Sunday, April 13, 2008, at Emmanuel Center, Danville, Pennsylvania. The daughter of Andrew and Elizabeth (Andrascik) Baloga, she was born on May 13, 1913, in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania.

Sister completed her elementary education at Sacred Heart School in Wilkes-Barre and attended St. Cyril Academy in Danville. She received a B.S. in Education from Marywood University, Scranton, Pennsylvania.

Sister Virginia entered the Sisters of SS. Cyril and Methodius on January 6, 1933, and was received as a novice on August 21 of that year. She made her first profession of vows on August 22, 1935.

Sister taught Grades 2-6 in parish elementary schools in New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania and South Carolina. For twenty

years she served as superior/principal. Sister also held administrative posts at Maria Joseph Manor and St. Methodius Convent. For six years she was a member of the Leadership Team.

In 1992 Sister Virginia retired to Maria Hall and later to Emmanuel Center in Danville.

Sister Virginia is survived by a sister, Mrs. Emily Jerista, two brothers, Albert and Aloys Baloga, and nieces and nephews.

The transferal rite and recitation of the Rosary took place on Wednesday, April 16, 2008, at 8:30 a.m., followed by a Wake Service at 11:15 a.m. Both services were held at Maria Hall. A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated at the Basilica of SS. Cyril and Methodius, Danville, at 1:30 p.m. on Wednesday, April 16, 2008. The main celebrant and homilist was the Reverend Gerard Heintzelmann, Motherhouse Chaplain. The concelebrants were the Reverend Cyril Rable, chaplain at Maria Hall and the Reverend Lawrence Nwabueze, O.P., Maria Joseph chaplain. Burial was in the Sisters' cemetery.

Memorial donations may be made to the Sisters of SS. Cyril and Methodius Villa Sacred Heart, Danville, PA 17821-1698.

Sister M. Henrietta, SS.C.M.

Sister M. Henrietta (Margaret T. Jacobs) died on Monday, April 14, 2008, at Maria Hall, Danville. The daughter of Michael and Mary (Kolesar) Jacobs, she was born in Anson, Maine, on December 12, 1915.

Sister attended Garrett Schenck School and Madison High School in Madison, Maine, and graduated from Mt. Assisi Academy, Bellevue, Pennsylvania. She received a B.S. in Education from Marywood University, Scranton, and an M.A. from Cardinal Stritch College, Chicago, Illinois.

Sister entered the Sisters of SS. Cyril and Methodius on August 1, 1934, and was received as a novice on August 22, 1935. On May 5, 1937, she professed the vows of poverty, chastity and obedience.

Sister Henrietta taught kindergarten and Grades 1 and 2 in Connecticut, New Jersey, New York and Pennsylvania. She was superior/principal at Holy Trinity School, Perth Amboy, New Jersey. For 11 years Sister Henrietta served as principal and kindergarten teacher at the Villa Preschool and Kindergarten in Danville.

Sister spent her retirement years at Maria Hall in Danville.

Sister Henrietta is survived by a sister, Arlene Jacobs, Anson, Maine, and a niece, Mary Beth Collins, Topsfield, Massachusetts.

The transferal rite and recitation of the Rosary took place at 4:00 p.m. and the Wake Service at 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, April 17, at Maria Hall, Danville. A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated at 9:00 a.m. on Friday, April 18, at Maria Hall. The celebrant was the Reverend Cyril Rable, Maria Hall chaplain, assisted by Deacon Adrien Picard.

Memorial donations may be made to the Sisters of SS. Cyril and Methodius, Villa Sacred Heart, Danville, PA 17821-1698.

Sister M. Petronilla Cizik, OSF

Sister M. Petronilla (Helen) Cizik, OSF, 91, a member of the School Sisters of St. Francis of the United States Province for 72 years, died Wednesday, April 16, 2008 at Monocacy Manor, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. Sister Petronilla entered the community

from Sacred Heart Parish in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania in September of 1933 and professed her first vows in 1935 at Mount Assisi Convent in Pittsburgh.

Sister began her long teaching career in the diocese of Pittsburgh in both elementary schools and religious education programs. Sister continued teaching in elementary schools in the archdioceses of Newark and Philadelphia and the dioceses of Allentown, Erie and Patterson. Sister spent 22 years at St. Ignatius Loyola School in West Lawn, Pennsylvania where she taught for 8 years and then ministered as an office aide. Upon retiring from St. Ignatius, Sister moved to the Motherhouse in Bethlehem in 2007 where she lived out the remainder of her life.

She was the daughter of the late Michael Cizik and Mary Jancisin. Sister Petronilla was preceded in death by her sisters and brothers: Mary Cizik, Caroline Cizik, Sister M. Lucy Cizik, O.S.F., Ann Cizik, Elizabeth Cizik, Michael Cizik and Stephen Cizik. She is survived by her religious community.

The viewing took place on Friday, April 18 at Monocacy Manor. A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on Saturday, April 19, in Immaculate Heart of Mary Chapel, Monocacy Manor. Arrangements were made by the Connell Funeral Home in Bethlehem.

Brian T. Rusnock

Branch 199

Hostetter, Pennsylvania

Brian T. Rusnock, 22, of Latrobe, Pennsylvania, died Sunday, April 13, 2008, in Washington County.

Born June 27, 1985, in Latrobe, he was the son of Thomas E. and Annette R. (Stas) Rusnock, of Latrobe.

Brian was a member of St. Cecilia Church, and was a graduate of California State University, where he majored in technology education. He was also on the Dean's list. He had been a member of Greater Latrobe Senior High School class of 2004.

Brian had a passion for music and loved the outdoors. He had done student teaching at Laurel Highlands High School, in Uniontown, and Margaret Bell Miller Middle School, in Waynesburg.

Brian was preceded in death by his paternal grandparents, Francis and Agnes Rusnock, and an uncle, William F. Rusnock.

In addition to his parents, he is survived by his sister, Kelly A. Rusnock of Latrobe, and his maternal grandparents, Joseph E. and Theresa M. Stas, of Latrobe. He is also survived by a number of aunts and uncles, Robert Rusnock and his wife Michelle, John Rusnock and his wife Beverly, Deborah Rusnock, Joseph Stas and his wife Linda, Dr. Ronald Stas and his wife Melanie, Regina Knestaut and her husband Keith, Edward Stas and his wife Nancy, Theresa Martincic, Kenneth Stas and his wife Sandy, Mary Helen Vasinko and her husband Raymond, Dorthea Looney and her husband Edgar, Sandra Fenton and her husband Neal, Renee Reisenweaver and her husband Kevin, and Randall Stas and his wife Susan; and a number of cousins, all who loved him dearly.

Friends were received at the John J. Lopatich Funeral Home, Latrobe. A Funeral Mass was celebrated in St. Cecilia Church with the Rev. Peter Augustine Pierjok, OSB, as celebrant. Interment was in Unity Cemetery, Latrobe.

Sophie Pipak

Munhall Branch 738 Hold Gala Evening

Members of the St. Michael Society, Branch 738, and their guests joined together on Sunday evening, October 14, 2007, for a Gala Evening of refreshments and good food, along with renewing friendships since the last gala two years ago.

Members began to arrive at around 5:00 p.m. at the Pittsburgh Elks Lodge No. 11 for cocktails. Among the honored guests were National President Andrew Rajec and National Treasurer George Matta and his wife Florence. Also present were Branch 738 officers, President Robert Kosko and his wife, Mary; Financial Secretary Jeanette Guidish; Auditor Joseph Yackovich and his wife, Florence; and Director of Fraternal Activities Regis Brekosky and his wife, Barbara.

Following cocktails and conversation, the buffet dinner was served promptly at 6:00 p.m. As usual, the food was very good and enjoyed by all.

At 7:00 p.m. a short meeting was held with remarks from our officers and guests. Our first speaker was President Andrew Rajec, who spoke of the Jednota, past, present

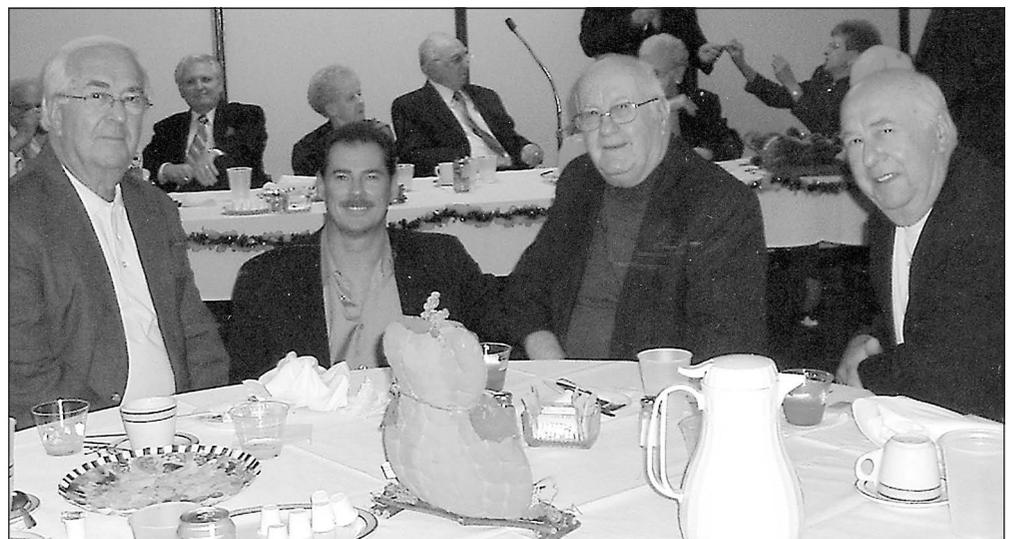
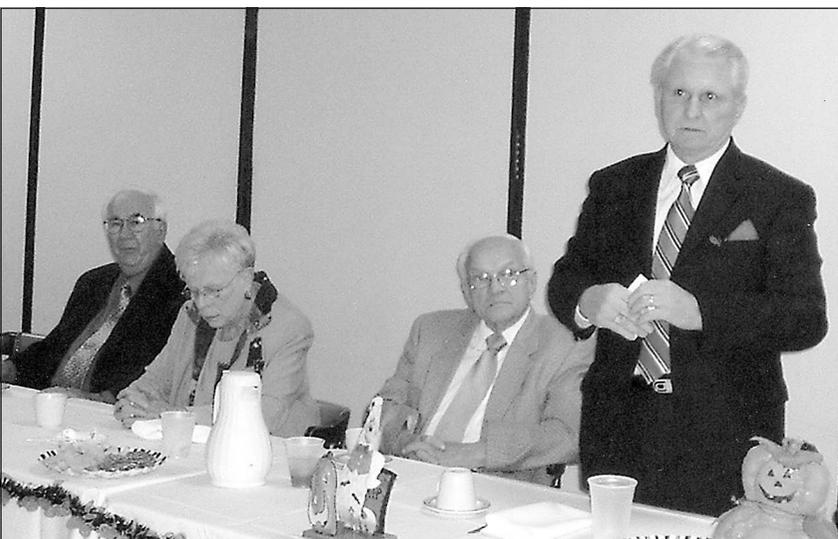
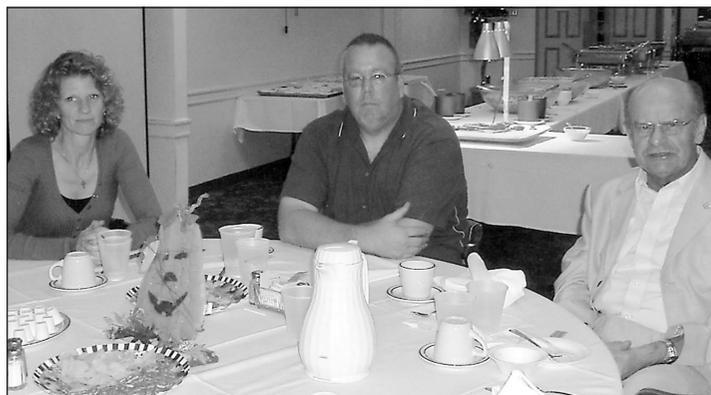
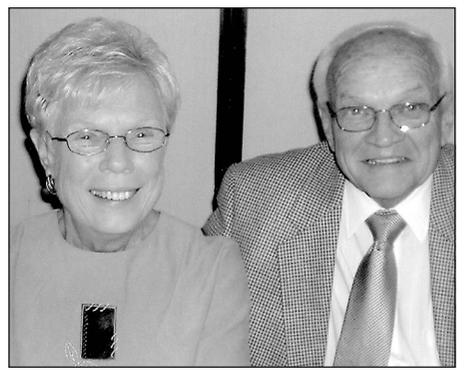
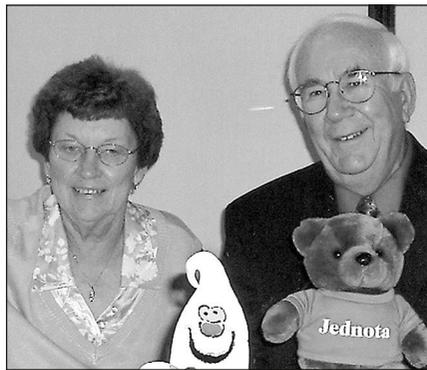
and future. He made reference to the fact that membership is very important to the survival of the Society and asked all of us to try to bring in new members. Treasurer George Matta talked on the importance of Fraternalism and the type of fellowship as we had there that evening. President Bob Kosko thanked all the members for attending the gala and reminded them to come to the next Branch meeting. Regional Director/Fraternal Director Regis P. Brekosky, F.I.C. gave his talk on the Products our recommenders have available for our friends and neighbors. Bring in the new members—it's good for both the Society and the recommender.

Following his talk, Regis Brekosky moved right to the cash raffle with plenty of cash filled envelopes. The raffle was open to all present. Everyone went home happy.

Fraternal Director Regis Brekosky thanked everyone on behalf of the Branch officers for attending the Gala. The remainder of the evening was spent with refreshments and good conversation.

Regis Brekosky

Scenes from the Branch 738 Gala



PAS Going to Slovakia to Perform -- Seeking Donations

The Pittsburgh Area Slovak Folk Ensemble

Michael J. Kopanic, Jr., Ph.D.

PÁS has received an invitation to perform in Slovakia!

What is PÁS? It is the Pittsburgh Area Slovak Folk Ensemble. And the group has an extraordinary opportunity to show its fine examples of Slovak song and dance at the Detva Folk Festival, one of the biggest gatherings of folk talent in all of Slovakia. The celebration of music occurs at the amphitheater below the scenic Polana mountain in the quaint town in Central Slovakia.

The Detva event takes place every year during the second week of July. PÁS plans to attend the 2009 event and contribute their talents to our fellow Slovak countrymen and women in the original homeland of our ancestors.

In order to make the trip to Slovakia, PÁS needs some funds to help support its performers' trip. But before going into details here, let's explain a little more about Pás and its mission.

PÁS began as a Slovak American ensemble over thirty years ago and has thrilled audiences around the United States. It aims to preserve the heritage and traditions of the "Old Country" of Slovakia in the United States. PÁS promotes our Slovak heritage "through the study of our common celebrations, stories, language, customs, and most of all, the music and dances of Slovakia."

The name PÁS is actually an acronym for the Slovak word meaning a "belt." In the words of PÁS, "the belt which united our group encompasses families from the greater Pittsburgh area from Monongahela to Mount Oliver to Monroeville and the communities in between, which welcomed our ancestors to this country."

PÁS draws its repertoire from the diverse traditions of Slovakia's many regions, from the "delicate movements of the north-central



Photo courtesy of Michael Kopanic

The picture features PAS performing the Valaska Dance, reminding us of Janosik, the Slovak Robin Hood.

Liptov region" to the "vigorous footwork of the central region of Detva." The troupe's members wear a variety of colorful kroj (costumes) which range from the floral embroideries of Zemplín in Eastern Slovakia to the "more staid blue and white" of the Trenčín district of Western Slovakia. The group studies in depth the customs and dance styles of each region so that the performances accurately portray the way they are done in Slovakia.

Over the years, PÁS has performed at many ethnic events and festivals. These have included a special presentation for the Slovak Embassy at the Cherry Blossom Festival in Washington, D.C., and "several well-received performances in Slovakia." Most recently, in 2007 PÁS performed at the Pittsburgh Folk Festival, the Annual Slovak Day in Kennywood Park, and at the Annual

University of Pittsburgh Slovak Festival. Last year at Christmas time, the troupe also put on a special performance for the church in Monroeville where they regularly practice every Friday night.

PÁS owes much of its success to John and Angela Lipchick, who direct the Ensemble. Also playing a substantial role is Jerry Jumba, a folk musician who plays the accordion for the troupe. He has served as choreographer for PÁS, and formerly for the Pittsburgh Slovaks, another fine area song and dance group.

The PÁS ensemble includes both an Adult group and a Children's group. Many of the adult members have their children perform in the youth group, and this is a fine way to help carry on Slovak traditions to the younger generation, for they grow up learning them. For instance, the Lipchicks

had their own children – John, Alissa, and Joe – participating from an early age. Thus PÁS is truly a family affair as well as an ethnic organization.

PÁS is always open to accepting new members to join their "extended family," those interested in carrying on Slovak traditions. After being impressed with their performances at the Pittsburgh Slovak Day at Kennywood in July 2007, this writer's own daughter, Milenka Kopanic, joined the troupe in September.

This year, PÁS received a formal invitation to participate in the Detva Folk Festival in Slovakia, so the group needs funding to support the costs of sending its 30 members to Slovakia. They work so hard every week all year long, and some measure of support from our readers and fraternal members would be a fine way to support the continuance of Slovak traditions in America and the Pittsburgh area.

During April 2008, PÁS began a year-long effort to raise funds for the trip. It launched its first of several fund raisers – a hoagie sale. But it would take a great deal of hoagies sold to meet their expenses, so any help from outside sources would be greatly appreciated. Pán Boh zaplat! (The Lord God will repay you!)

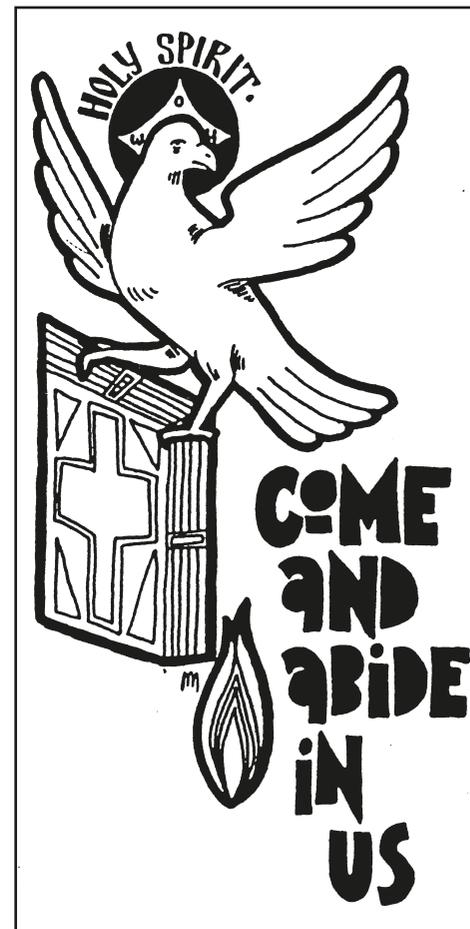
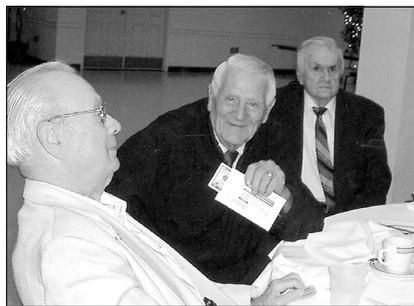
PÁS estimates that the trip will cost about \$50,000 to cover expenses for travel, and Slovakia is covering some of the expenses for food and lodging over there.

Any one interested in supporting this well-deserved cause may send a check to help defray the expenses. Please send your donations to:

PÁS Folk Ensemble
1254 Old Concord Road
Monroeville, PA 15146
Tel. (412) 373-3873

This is a cause well worth our support, and a future article in this column will explain more about the Detva Folk Festival and PÁS.

Scenes from the Branch 738 Gala



Posledné mesiace života Dr. Jozefa Tisu

(Prednáška na seminári o Prezidentovi Slovenskej republiky J. Tisovi v Evanjelizačnom dome Quo vadis v Bratislave 18. apríla 2007)

František Vnuč

Dnes si pripomíname 60. výročie potupnej smrti prvého prezidenta Slovenskej republiky Dr. Jozefa Tisu. V rámci tejto spomienky mne pripadla úloha zrekapitulovať posledné mesiace jeho pozemského života, od jeho odchodu do emigrácie až po jeho smrť na šibenici. Boli to mesiace najväčšieho poníženia nielen Dr. J. Tisu, ale aj celého národa, ktorému v rokoch 1939 -1945 stál na čele. V marci 1945, keď sa front približoval k Bratislave, prezident a vláda opustili hlavné mesto a presťahovali sa do Holiča a Skalice. Očakávali, že front sa zastaví na obrannej línii pozdĺž Malých Karpát a Váhu. Ale postup Červenej armády sa už zastaviť nedal a bolo treba ísť ďalej na západ do Rakúska. Ich dočasným sídlom sa stal starobylý benediktínsky kláštor v Kremsmuenstri.



František Vnuč

Odtiaľ sa prezident so svojimi najbližšími spolupracovníkmi vybral do Mníchova, kde sa chcel dať do ochrany kardinála Faulhabera. Nechcel sa zachrániť kvôli sebe, ale kvôli budúcnosti národa. Dúfal, že bude môcť pokojne a objektívne predložiť víťazným veľmociam slovenskú situáciu, vysvetliť im, ako a prečo sa Slovensko osamostatnilo, čo sme robili a prečo sme tak robili a hlavne zdôrazniť - na základe samourčovacieho práva - nezlomnú túžbu národa po samostatnom živote vo vlastnom štáte.

Ale v tom chaotickom čase posledných dní vojny sa prezidentovi už nepodarilo dostať sa do Mníchova. Bol nútený uchýliť sa do kapucínskeho kláštora v Altoettingu. Tu ho objavila americká pátracia služba. Zaistili ho a dňa 14. júna 1945 odviekli najprv do zaisťovacieho tábora v Garmich-Partenkirchen a neskôr ho odtiaľ premiestnili do Freising. V rukách amerických vojenských orgánov bol prezident Tiso vystavený fyzickému a psychologickému trýzneniu, ktoré navždy ostane hroznou obžalobou americkej demokracie a justície. O tomto neľudskom zaobchádzaní sa prezident Tiso svojmu nemeckému priateľovi vyjadril takto: "Wir haben alles erlitten ausser der Kreuzigung - prešli sme krížovou cestou až po ukrižovanie". To ukrižovanie ho čakalo doma.

Koncom októbra 1945 americké okupačné úrady vydali Dr. Tisu a jeho spoločníkov do rúk č.-s. policajných orgánov. Dňa 27. októbra ich priviezli do Prahy, odkiaľ ich o dva dni neskoršie eskortovali v putách do Bratislavy. Prezidenta umiestnili vo väznici Krajského súdu a tam ho potom vyšetrovali, súdili, odsúdili a popravili.

V ponížení svojho prezidenta národ videl svoje vlastné poníženie. V svojej bezmocnosti sa zmožil iba na niektoré protestné a záchranné akcie. Tie však nijako neovplyvnili hnev a nenávisť "víťazných nepriateľov národa, riadiacich sa starou pohanskou zásadou "Vae victis - Beda premoženým!"

Komunisti a im podobní protivníci slovenskej samostatnosti volali po prisnom potrestaní prezidenta a jeho vlády a nástojili, aby proces začal ešte pred Vianocami 1945. Ale aby konanie Národného súdu malo aspoň vonkajšie znaky justičného procesu, bolo treba pripraviť formálnu obžalobu. Príprava procesu sa hneď rozbehla, ale jej tempo sa spomalilo v prvých mesiacoch roka 1946 v dôsledku blížiacich sa volieb. Tie sa mali konať 26. mája 1946. Vedelo sa, že voľby vyhrá tá strana, ktorej odovzdá hlasy katolícka väčšina národa, ktorú dovtedy noví vládcovia Slovenska iba zaznávali a prenasledovali. V marci 1946 predstavitelia slovenských katolíkov uzavreli s evanjelickým vedením Demokratickej strany tzv. Aprílovú dohodu, v ktorej za hlasy slovenských katolíkov slovenskí evanjelici pripustili k účasti na moci aj zástupcov katolíckej väčšiny. K zmluve patrilo aj ústne uistenie (gentlemen's agreement) ohľadne procesu s Dr. Tisom: Prezident nebude odsúdený a v prípade, že by bol - bude omilostený.

Po tomto písomnom a ústnom dohovore katolícki biskupi doporučili veriaciim hlasovať na Demokratickú stranu, ktorá potom drvivou väčšinou vyhrala voľby a Komunistická strana Slovenska utrhla pokorujúcu porážku.

Proces s Dr. Jozefom Tisom a jeho dvomi spoločníkmi (Dr. Ferdinand Ďurčanský a Alexander Mach) sa začal 2. decembra 1946 čítaním obžalobného spisu, ktorý obsahoval 113 "zločinov", z ktorých takmer každý niesol so sebou obligatórny trest smrti. Treba však dodať, že išlo o retrospektívnu justíciu. To bolo úplne v rozpore s tradíciou európskeho súdnictva, kde platí zásada Nullum crimen sine lege - niet viny, keď nieta zákona, ktorý bol prestúpený. Ale naši ľudovodemokratickí zákonodarcovia nadekrétovali zákony so spiatočnou platnosťou a súdili Dr. Tisu nielen za to, čo robil v rokoch 1939 - 1945, ale aj za jeho činnosť pred rokom 1938, teda za činnosť, ktorú vykonával v medziach platnosti zákonov predmníchovskej Č-SR.

Za predsedu Národného súdu bol vymenovaný Igor Daxner a obžalobcami boli Ľudovít Rigan, Juraj (Jirí) Šujan, Michal Gero a Anton Rašla. Obhajcami Dr. Tisu boli: Martin Grečo a Ernest Žabkay. Súd vypočul asi 200 svedkov, ale nie vždy tých, ktorých žiadala obhajoba. Mnohí svedkovia, ktorí by mohli svedčiť v prospech prezidenta, jednoducho neboli pripustení, a viacerí z tých, čo boli pripustení, neboli prisahaní a teda ich svedectvo nemalo patričnú váhu. Pri výpovediach svedkov predseda súdu často nedovoliť odpovedať na otázku, ktorú obhajoba predložila.

Hoci išlo o verejný proces, prístup do súdnej siene bol obmedzený na 50 osôb a o tom, kto dostane povolenie, rozhodoval Dr. Daxner. Správy o priebehu súdu, určené pre verejnosť boli kontrolované a cenzurované. Slovom, išlo tu o zmanipulovaný politický proces, o akt politickej pomsty, kde rozsudok bol už vopred rozhodnutý. Robilo sa však všetko možné, aby vznikol dojem, že pred súdom stojí zločinec, ktorým národ opovrhne a žiada jeho potrestanie. Ale národ sa nedal oklamať a nepodarilo sa oklamať ani cudzinu. Britský konzul v Bratislave John A. Grant v svojich správach často poukazoval na túto "travesty of justice" (travestiu [výsmech] súdneho konania) a pripomínal: "Ako viete, Slováci sú z 80% katolíci a tí predstavujú mienku masy, ktorá je dnes prevažnou mierou na Tisovej strane."

Spomedzi akcií na obranu Dr. Tisu osobitnú zmienku si zasluhuje postoj slovenských katolíckych biskupov. Už v januári 1946, ešte predtým než začal proces s Dr. Tisom, Zbor biskupov Slovenska adresoval osobitnú žiadosť Predsedníctvu SNR, v ktorej - medzi iným - pripomína, že "Dr. Jozef Tiso bol vždy kňaz horlivo bezúhonného života. Vo svojej rozsiahlej aktivite usiloval sa pracovať pre dobro celku a osobne sa neobohacoval... Väčšina slovenského národa je s nami presvedčená, že úmysly Dr. Jozefa Tisu pri verejnej činnosti boli tie najlepšie... Celá slovenská verejnosť sleduje vývoj udalostí okolo Dr. Jozefa Tisu a vo väčšine zaujíma záporný postoj voči tým snahám, ktoré chcú vyvolať nenávisť voči jeho osobe. Týmto sa len zväčšuje neblahé triedenie národa..."

Predsedníctvo SNR na list neodpovedalo. Zbor katolíckych biskupov Slovenska však neprestával vyjadrovať svoje obavy a znepokojenie nad priebehom procesu a nad jeho možnými následkami. Keď sa proces skončil a čakalo sa na rozsudok, slovenskí biskupi znovu pozdvihli svoj hlas na obranu Dr. J. Tisu. V prvých dňoch apríla 1947 trnavský apoštolský administrátor Dr. Pavol Jantausch v mene Zboru biskupov sa obracal na prezidenta Beneša s takouto prosbou: "Slovutný pán prezident! Z poverenia Biskupského zboru Slovenska a v jeho mene úctivo prosím, aby ste ráčili udeliť milosť Dr. Jozefovi Tisovi, ak by bol Národným súdom v Bratislave na smrť odsúdený... Celý biskupský zbor je presvedčený, že Vaša Excelencia svoje právo ako hlava štátu použije v dobro nášho národného a štátneho života a udelí milosť prípadne na smrť odsúdenému Dr. Jozefovi Tisovi."

Ako vieme, ani tento list neobmäkčil nenávisťou zatvrdnuté srdcia a nezachránil prezidenta Tisu. Bol odsúdený na smrť, milosť od prezidenta nedostal a bol obesený ako obyčajný zločinec.

Dnes však oveľa dôležitejšie je to, že v rokoch 1945-1947 katolícki biskupi, ktorí predstavovali najvyššiu morálnu a spoločenskú autoritu v národe, zaujali takéto pevné stanovisko, aj keď si uvedomovali, že bolo politicky nepopulárne a pre nich osobne škodlivé. Hovorili však ako zodpovední pastieri a tlmočníci veriaceho ľudu, ktorému "ľudovodemokratický" režim zviazal ruky a zapchal ústa. Poznali Dr. Tisu, bezprostredne sledovali jeho politickú činnosť v ťažkých vojnových časoch, posudzovali ju v kontexte súčasných udalostí, vedeli, čo mohol a čo nemohol urobiť, čomu zabránil a čomu sa nedalo predísť. Vydali o ňom svedectvo, ktoré (spolu so svedeckou výpoveďou arcibiskupa Kmeťku a biskupa Buzalku v Tisovom procese) navždy ostanú žiarivým príkladom statočnosti, nebojácnosti a pravého kresťanského postoja.

Proces s Dr. Tisom a spoločníkmi skončil záverečnými prejavmi obžalobcov (13. a 14. marca), kde všetci traja žiadali trest smrti povrazom. Po nich prehovorili obhajcovia (15. a 16. marca) a 17. marca povedal svoju obhajobnú reč Dr. J. Tiso. V deväťhodinovom prejave vykreslil obraz svojej životnej činnosti, ktorá sa vždy niesla v znamení hesla "za Boha a národ". To bol jeho testament i jeho odkaz.

Dňa 19. marca 1947 Dr. Igor Daxner vyhlásil proces za skončený a oznámil, že súd sa zide ešte raz, aby vyniesol konečný rozsudok. Podľa predpisov rozsudok mal byť vynesý do 30 dní po skončení procesu.

Priebeh procesu a hysterické hlasy obžaloby, najmä krvožizna rétorika Dr. A. Rašlu, jasne naznačovali, Dr. Tiso bude odsúdený na smrť.

Ľudia a zoskupenia so zmyslom pre spravodlivosť a ľudskosť zahájili rozmanité akcie na záchranu života Dr. J. Tisu. Na viacerých miestach Slovenska sa odohrali spontánne ľudové demonštrácie (napr. Piešťany, Chynorany, Nové Mesto nad Váhom, etc.), ktoré však boli políciou rozohnané. Za mierny a ohľaduplný rozsudok sa prihovárali rozličné spolky a organizácie na Slovensku i v zahraničí, intervenovali predstavitelia katolíckej i evanjelickej cirkvi, viacerí odvážni jednotlivci. Zvlášť pozoruhodné boli akcie zo strany Vatikánu, Francúzska a Veľkej Británie. I keď to neboli vždy formálne diplomatické zákroky (aby sa vyhlavlo obvineniu, že sa zasahuje do vnútorných záležitostí Česko-Slovenska), boli to chvályhodné pokusy ovplyvniť príslušné úradné miesta, aby sa neprekročila hranica politickej únosnosti, ale radšej sa citlivo uplatňovala zásada "justice with mercy" (spravodlivosť so súcitnosťou). Je napríklad známe, že britský veľvyslanec v Prahe Philip Nicholas sa v tejto veci obrátil na ministra školstva J. Stránskeho, na ministra zahraničia Jana Masaryka, ministra spravodlivosti Prokopa Drtinu i na prezidenta Beneša. Všetci ministri súhlasili, že prisný trest, prípadne poprava Dr. Tisu, prehĺbi priepasť medzi Čechmi a Slovákmi a medzi katolíckmi a evanjelikmi na Slovensku, ale ani jeden sa nechcel zaviazat, že sa prihovorí za mierne potrestanie, alebo milosť. Prezident Beneš veľvyslancovi povedal, že sa bude riadiť doporučením vlády. Vyjadril sa asi v tomto zmysle: "Viem, že trest smrti rozdelí národ, či ho už omilostím, alebo nie. Ak dostane milosť budú sa búriť tí, čo za okupácie trpeli, ak bude popravený, budú mi to zazlievať tí druhí."

František Vnuč

(Pokračovanie)

**Získajte ešte dnes nového člena
do Prvej Katolíckej Slovenskej
Jednoty**

Na Slovensku vyrobili rekordný počet automobilov

Bratislava (TASR) – Slovenské automobilky vlni vyrobili celkovo 571,071 automobilov, čo predstavuje medziročný nárast o takmer 300,000 vozidiel. Na tlačovej konferencii v Bratislave o tom nedávno informoval prezident Združenia automobilového priemyslu (ZAP) SR Jozef Uhrík. "Dosiahli sme rekordnú produkciu v troch na Slovensku pôsobiach automobilkách," povedal Uhrík. Slovenská republika sa týmto dostala na prvé miesto vo výrobe vozidiel na 1000 obyvateľov vo svete - pripadá na nich 105.7 vyprodukovaných áut. Podľa Uhríka výroba v žilinskom závode Kia a trnavskom PSA spoločne prevýšila bratislavský Volkswagen, ktorý u nás pôsobí najdlhšie.

Podľa informácií, ktoré prezentoval Uhrík, celkové množstvo produkcie automobilov na území Slovenska by malo dosiahnuť 640,000. Uhrík pripomenul, že SR vlni dosiahla najnižšie saldo obchodnej bilancie - 21.385 miliardy Sk (0.66 miliardy eur) a dokonca, ako jedna z mála krajín, mala aktívne saldo s USA 20.15 miliardy Sk (0.62 miliardy eur). Ako ďalej predseda ZAP uviedol, vlni v oblasti automobilového priemyslu došlo k prírastku zamestnanosti o 8,853 pracovníkov, celkovo teda pre

automobilový priemysel pracovalo 75,728 osôb. "Očakávame, že v automobilovom priemysle bude v roku 2010 pracovať takmer 100,000 ľudí," vyhlásil Uhrík.

Na otázku novinárov o teoretickej možnosti príchodu ďalšej automobilky na Slovensko Uhrík odpovedal, že túto možnosť "nemôže vylúčiť". "Bolo by však treba vyriešiť otázku nedostatku pracovných síl," upozornil. Podľa neho je tiež načas, aby SR začala diskutovať o zmene legislatívy v oblasti migračnej politiky, a tým zabezpečila krajine dostatok kvalifikovaných pracovníkov.

Uhrík niekoľkokrát zdôraznil, že dôvodom, prečo sa investície do automobilového priemyslu "končia za Strečnom" je jednoznačne zlá cestná infraštruktúra a nedobudované diaľnice. Pre východné Slovensko je podľa neho najdôležitejšie dobudovať diaľnice, pretože "železnica nestačí, je pomalá." Ako upozornil, systém výroby v automobilkách dnes funguje na princípe "just-in-time" a investori preto požadujú rýchlosť prepravy komponentov a časovú flexibilitu. Dobudovanie diaľničnej siete považuje za "superstrategickú úlohu štátu".



Stará "Digi-bytovka" v Prešove pri Budovateľskej ulici akoby na jar rozkvitla satelitnými taniermi. 18. apríla 2008
FOTO TASR - Milan Kapusta

Slovenský parlament schválil Lisabonskú zmluvu

Bratislava (TASR) – Prezident SR Ivan Gašparovič je rád, že Národná rada SR 10. apríla schválila Lisabonskú zmluvu. Hlava štátu jednoznačne podporuje tento krok a zároveň oceňuje postoj zákonodarcov, ktorí za ňu zahlasovali. "Pán prezident víta, že niektorí opoziční poslanci si uvedomili zodpovednosť Slovenskej republiky za toto rozhodnutie, ktoré nás zahŕňa medzi krajiny, ktoré sa postavili zodpovedne k svojej európskej budúcnosti," povedal prezidentov hovorca Marek Trubač. Pripomenul, že prezident bol jedným z tých, ktorí pres-

dzovali prijatie európskej reformnej zmluvy, hneď po vyhlásení opozičných strán, že ju nepodporia. Dodal, že tento dokument je dôležitý pre ďalšie fungovanie všetkých 27 krajín EÚ.

Lisabonskú zmluvu podporilo 103 zo 109 prítomných poslancov, piati boli proti, jeden nehlasoval. Slovensko sa tak stalo deviatou členskou krajinou Európskej únie, ktorá ju schválila. Dokument ešte musí podpísať prezident SR Ivan Gašparovič. Na hlasovaní sa nezúčastnili poslanci za SDKÚ-DS a KDH.

MS a SNK podpísali Memorandum o porozumení

Martin (TASR) – Memorandum o porozumení Matice slovenskej (MS) a Slovenskej národnej knižnice (SNK), ktoré má byť začiatkom novej konštruktívnej spolupráce, v polovici apríla podpísali správca MS Ján Eštok a generálny riaditeľ SNK Dušan Katuščák. Podľa riaditeľa Informačného ústredia MS v Martine Ľubomíra Kraľovanského spory medzi týmito inštitúciami nastali prijatím takzvaného knižničného zákona v roku 2000, kedy sa SNK odčlenila od MS.

"Obidve inštitúcie a ministerstvo kultúry, aj napriek mnohým dohovorom a rokovaniam, doteraz nenašli zhodu v realizácii uvedeného zákona v oblasti delimitácie zbierok, majetku, fondov a vo využívaní historických

budov MS," skonštatoval Kraľovanský. V memorande obe strany deklarovali oddanosť historickému odkazu zakladateľov MS, spoločný záujem čím skôr prekonať obdobie a neuralgické body nedorozumenia a napätia vo vzájomných vzťahoch a na tomto základe vytvoriť predpoklady pre korektné a partnerské formy vzájomnej spolupráce. Zároveň sa zaviazali pripraviť náčrt výhľadového plánu konštruktívnej spolupráce do roku 2013 a zabezpečiť vo verejných prezentáciách, stanoviskách a dokumentoch vzájomnú slušnosť a korektnosť, obzvlášť rešpekt k historickým označeniam dokumentov oboch ustanovizní, ako aj spoločným historickým koreňom a tradíciám.

ŠTEFÁNIKOVA MATKA

Štefan Krčméry

"Chod', syn môj, vo svet široký,
keď už raz tak byť musí;
to naše plemä slovenské
i tak sa v biede duší.

Chod', syn môj! vo svete ďalekom
na mater nezabudni -
a vráť sa, vráť sa víťazom,
ak svitne raz deň súdny."

A šiel chlapec beľavý
a míňali sa letá,
a naučil sa vo svete,
ako sa voľne lieta.

Po púšťach lietal, ostrovoch,
a meral hviezdne dráhy;
matkino slovo v srdci mal,
na mysli domov drahý.

A keď mu boli tri svety,
za matkou túžil veľa
a v očiach sa mu iskrilo,
keď zahrneli delá.

A roztúžil sa bolestne
a bôľ mu viazol v hrdle,

a vyšvihol sa ako vták
a za ním celé krdle.

Hoj, za ním krdle bez počtu
a všetky jasné, smelé,
slobodu nesú, slobodu,
a on im lieta v čele.

Slobodu nesú, slobodu,
a rodná zem ich čaká;
už vidno lietať oblohou
najjasnejšieho vtáka.

Slobodu nesú, slobodu,
hoc život svoj dal za ňu.
Už rodná zem mu pije krv
a matke slzy kanú.

"Už si mi, syn môj, doletel,
už ty môj sokol, sokol pravý!
Nech čistý kvet tu vyrastie
z tej tvojej čistej krvi.

Nech slnko Božie svieti naň
a zem mu dáva vlahy,
Mať tvoja rodná žehná ťa,
spi sladko, syn môj drahý!"

Za čo sa modlíme?

Tak ľahko sa modlíme za nesprávne veci:

za silu, ktorú môžeme dosiahnuť, a Boh nám dá slabosť, aby sme zmúdreli; za zdravie, vďaka ktorému môžeme urobiť veľké veci, a Boh na nás dopustí telesnú chybu, aby sme mohli vykonať lepšie veci; za bohatstvo, ktoré by nás obšťastňovalo, a Boh nám dá chudobu, aby sme sa stali múdri; za silu, ktorou sa môžeme chváliť pred ľuďmi, a Boh nám dá slabosť, aby sme cítili, že ho potrebujeme; za všetky veci, ktoré prinášajú radosť zo života, a Boh nám dá život, aby sme sa mohli tešiť zo všetkých vecí. Ak sme nedostali nič, o čo sme prosili, dostali sme všetky dary, v ktoré sme prirodzene dúfali, naša modlitba bola vyslyšaná a my sme požehnaní.

ROBERT LLEWELYN

Sympóziu o činnosti a tvorbe kanadského dejateľa Štefana Hrehu

Prešovský samosprávny kraj, Vlastivedné múzeum v Hanušovciach nad Topľou, Oblastné pracovisko Matice slovenskej vo Vranove nad Topľou a Základná umelecká škola Vranov nad Topľou z iniciatívy MVDr. Pavla Bindasa, pri príležitosti 90-ročného životného jubilea Štefana Hrehu, usporiadali sympóziu o jeho činnosti a tvorbe v Kanade na tému Štefan Hreha a jeho miesto v národnom živote zahraničného Slováka pod názvom Amerika - zem ďaleká z cyklu Za poznaním svojeti.

V príhovore Rodná obec nezabúda, Dr. Bindas sprítomnil oslávenca ako "otca Kanadského Slováka", ktorý vychádza už vyše 65 rokov, národného buditeľa Slováka v Kanade, básnika, spisovateľa, redaktora, šéfredaktora, dramatika, historika, osvetového pracovníka, nositeľa Medaile Matice slovenskej ako aj viacerých uznaní kanadských

spolkov, človeka preniknutého skrz-naskrz k ľuďom, k svojmu národu v ďalekej Kanade, ale aj doma pevne zviazaného so svojimi hlboko v duši zapustenými koreňami. Vzorný manžel a otec, vždy pripravený vypočuť, pomôcť, poradiť."

V programovom rámci sympózia odznela jeho Pieseň o domovine v hudobnej kompozícii muzikológa prof. Michala Sinčaka. Sympóziu sa uskutočnilo 13. marca 2008 v múzeu (HZOS) vo Vranove nad Topľou.



Štefan Hreha

apb (VN)

Prezident SR udelil štátne vyznamenanie Nine Holej

Pri príležitosti 15. výročia vzniku Slovenskej republiky prezident SR Ivan Gašparovič udelil 22 osobnostiam štátne vyznamenanie. Medzi nimi boli aj dvaja Slováci zo zahraničia - tajomníčka Slovenskej ligy v Amerike Nina Holá a spisovateľ a organizátor slovenského života v Maďarsku Gregor Papuček.

Nina Holá dostala vyznamenanie Pribinov kríž druhej triedy na návrh vlády Slovenskej republiky za "oddanosť slovenskému národu, ktorú potvrdzuje ako dlhoročná funkcionárka slovenských spolkov v Amerike, päť rokov je tajomníčkou Slovenskej ligy v Amerike, osem rokov členkou Etnického poradného zboru pre guvernéra štátu New Jersey, neustále rozvíja americkoslovenský život a je oddaná slovenskému národu vo vlasti i v Amerike." Nina Holá sa narodila v Spojených štátoch amerických v New Yorku. Ako dvojročná, v roku 1934, prišla s rodičmi na Slovensko. Základnú školu vychodila v Košeci pri Trenčíne a strednú začala študovať v Ilave, dokončila ju však až na High School v New Yorku, keď sa sama ako 15-ročná vrátila k príbuzným do USA. Profesionálne sa pani Holá venovala účtovníctvu, neskôr robila auditorku pre americkú armádu a námorníctvo.

Ďalšie vyznamenania boli udelené dvadsiatim jednotlivcom za vynikajúce úspechy v oblasti vedy, literatúry, športu a za vojenské zásluhy. Dvomi jednotlivcami boli vyznamenania udelené In memoriam. Slávnostné odovzdávanie vyznamenaní sa konalo v priestoroch historickej budovy Slovenskej národnej rady na Hodžovom námestí v Bratislave. Na odovzdávaní boli prítomní spolu s manželkami prezident SR Ivan Gašparovič, predseda vlády Robert Fico, predseda parlamentu Pavol Paška, väčšina členov vlády SR, viacerí poslanci a predstavitelia kultúrnych inštitúcií, zástupcovia diplomatického zboru a zástupcovia cirkví.

Odovzdávaniu vyznamenaní predchádzalo vystúpenie sláčikového kvarteta, počasom hovorkyňa Kancelárie prezidenta prečítala mená poctených s individuálnym odôvodnením každého vyznamenania. Po skončení programu nasledovala vládna recepcia, na ktorej mali krátke príhovory predseda vlády Robert Fico a predseda parlamentu Pavol Paška.

Medzi prítomnými diplomatmi bol aj americký veľvyslanec Vincent Obsitnik, ktorý po programe tajomníčke SLvA gratuloval a pozval ju s manželom na návštevu amerického veľvyslanectva. Zo Spojených štátov v minulosti štátne vyznamenania SR dostali Ján Holý, Dr. Ľudovít Pavlo a Dr. Ladislav Bolchazy.



Prezident Ivan Gašparovič odovzdáva Nine Holej štátne vyznamenanie Slovenskej republiky dňa 1. januára 2008 pri príležitosti Dňa vzniku SR.

Minister Kubiš rokoval s predstaviteľmi Vatikánu

Vatikán (TASR) – Minister zahraničných vecí SR Ján Kubiš sa 11. apríla vo Vatikáne stretol so štátnym sekretárom Svätej stolice kardinálom Tarcisiom Bertonom. Návšteva slovenského ministra sa uskutočnila pri príležitosti 15. výročia nadviazania diplomatických stykov medzi Slovenskom a Vatikánom. Obaja predstavitelia na prvom spoločnom stretnutí vyslovili spokojnosť s doterajším rozvojom vzťahov medzi Slovenskom a Vatikánom a diskutovali o uplatňovaní existujúcich bilaterálnych zmlúv. Šéf slovenskej diplomacie ďalej povedal, že informoval kardinála Bertoneho o schválení Lisabonskej zmluvy v Národnej rade SR. V tejto súvislosti analyzovali oblasti politiky EÚ, v ktorej Slovensko a Vatikán zaujímajú podobné postoje, napríklad v sociálnej sfére.

Minister Kubiš absolvoval aj stretnutie so sekretárom Svätej stolice pre vzťahy so štátmi Dominiquom Mamberitim, ktorého pozval na návštevu Slovenska. Tieto rozhovory sa zamerali na

aktuálne zahraničnopolitické otázky vrátane problematiky Kosova, Bosny a Hercegoviny, Blízkeho východu a krajín východnej Európy Ruska, Ukrajiny a Bieloruska. Kubiš sa zúčastnil aj na prezentácii zborníka Slovensko a Svätá stolica v 20. storočí, ktorý pri príležitosti 15. výročia nadviazania diplomatických stykov medzi SR a Svätou stolicou vydalo slovenské veľvyslanectvo vo Vatikánskom knižnom nakladateľstve.

Na podujatí sa zúčastnili aj viacerí slovenskí cirkevní predstavitelia vrátane predsedu Konferencie biskupov Slovenska Mons. Františka Tondru a trnavského arcibiskupa Mons. Jána Sokola. V programe ministra Kubiša figurovalo aj stretnutie s novozvoleným veľmajstrom Zvrchovaného radu maltežských rytierov Fra' Matthewom Festingom. Okrem iného bolo zamerané na výmenu skúseností z poskytovania humanitárnej pomoci v krízových oblastiach sveta. Návšteva slovenského ministra vo Vatikáne pokračovala stretnutím s kardinálom Jozefom Tomkom.

Oneskorená jar ...

Jaro sa k nám, akosi neponáhľa ...
Slniečko, sa iba, na krátko ukáže.
Chladný, jarný vietor a studená vlaha,
ho snáď k zemi priviaže ...
Nádej, je však, tá krásna vec,
že slniečko predsa, zvíťazí na koniec.

Zobudí snežienky, zo zimného spánku
a nám, dá do daru, čerstvého vánku.
Ktože, by nerád videl, tie modré fialky,
veď sú krásou, našej poľnej cesty.
Príjemne voňajú, vidíme ich z diaľky.

Jozef Smák

Oznámenia spolkov a okresov

Polročná schôdza Okresu Msgr. Štefana Krasuľu IKSJ

Oznamujeme všetkým členom, že polročná schôdza Okresu Msgr. Krasuľu, Spolok č. 16 Prvej Katolíckej Slovenskej Jednoty sa bude konať v nedeľu dňa 1. júna 2008 o 1:00 hodine poobede, po slovenskej omši v osadnej hale Slovenského kostola sv. Jána Nepomúckeho 411 East 66 Street v N.Y.C. Prosíme všetky spolky, ktoré patria do nášho Okresu, aby láskavo poslali čo najviac delegátov. Upozorňujeme, že aj nedelegáti sú vítaní.

Program schôdze bude zameraný na prípravu plánu činnosti na budúce obdobie. Po schôdzi bude občerstvenie, ktoré pripraví Spolok sv. Matúša.

Ostávam s kresťanským pozdravom: "Pochválený buď Ježiš Kristus".

Henrieta H. Daitová, tajomníčka

Jarná zábava v Linden N.J.

Pozývame širokú slovenskú verejnosť aby prišla medzi nás na tanečnú zábavu, ktorú usporiada Slovenské kultúrne stredisko v sobotu 17. mája 2008 v Msgr. Komar Hall 2806 Parkway Ave (Tremley Point) v Linden, New Jersey.

Večera sa bude podávať od 8.00 - 9.00 hodine na bufetový spôsob. Prosíme záujemcov aby prišli na toto podujatie načas. Vstupné za osobu je \$25.00 v čom je započítaná aj večera. O občerstvenie v bare je tiež postarané. Do tanca bude hrať hudobno-spevácka skupina Kontakty.

O rezervácie a zakúpenie lístkov volajte na tieto čísla: Mary Karch: (732) 572-2331; Kamila Halas: (732) 888-3131.

Mary Karch
Za Slovenské kultúrne stredisko

Krátke správy zo Slovenska

Maďarsky hovoriaci veriaci Bankobystrickej diecézy majú svojho biskupského vikára. Diecézny biskup Rudolf Baláž 10. apríla oficiálne menoval a predstavil kňazom diecézy Jozefa Mahulányiho, biskupského vikára pre veriacich hovoriacich po maďarsky. Podľa Zuzany Juhaniakovej z Diecézneho centra pre masmediálnu politiku biskup Baláž voľbu vikára dôkladne zvažoval a vypočul si názory kléru. Biskupského vikára Jozefa Mahulányiho predstavil zhromaždeným kňazom reorganizovanej Banskobystrickej diecézy počas celodiecéznych rekolekcií v Kňazskom seminári Františka Xaverského v Badíne. Mahulányi pôsobí v súčasnosti ako dekan v Šahách. Narodil sa 6. októbra 1966 v Štúrove. Kňazskú vysviacku prijal v júni 1990, pôsobil aj v Plastovciach a Vrakuni a od roku 2005 bol farárom v Šahách.

Na Slovensku, podobne ako vo väčšine vyspelých krajín sveta, dochádza v dlhodobom kontexte k postupnému nárastu počtu úmrtí na zhubné nádory. "Kým v roku 1920 zomrelo na Slovensku na zhubné nádory asi 1.5 percenta mužov a 1.8 percenta žien, v roku 2003 predstavovala mortalita na zhubné nádory 24.5 percenta zo všetkých úmrtí u mužov a 19.4 percenta u žien," uviedla vedúca oddelenia Národného onkologického registra (NOR) SR Martina Ondrušová. Stúpajúcu tendenciu má aj výskyt zhubných nádorov. Podobný vzostup možno pozorovať najmä v posledných desaťročiach vo všetkých vyspelých štátoch. Ide najmä o zhubné nádory pľúc, hrubého čreva a konečníka, kože, prostaty a žalúdka u mužov; prsníka, hrubého čreva, konečníka, pohlavných orgánov, pľúc a žalúdka u žien. Slovensko sa zaraďuje k štátom s vysokými hodnotami výskytu zhubných nádorov hrubého čreva a konečníka.

Tlačová agentúra Slovenskej republiky (TASR) 14. apríla na bratislavskom letisku oficiálne predstavila novú verejnoprávnú službu. Ide o zverejňovanie správ zo servisu TASR na 370 obrazovkách po celom Slovensku. Tie sú umiestnené na letiskách, vo všetkých nákupných centrách Hypernovy a čerpacích staniaciach Slovnaftu. Novú službu pre verejnosť realizuje TASR v spolupráci so spoločnosťou Plazma Media. "Verejnosť sa tak môže v aktuálnom čase a bez akéhokoľvek obmedzenia dozvedieť o hlavných udalostiach na Slovensku. Ide o službu možno nevhodnú, ale v dnešnej dobe dostatočne atraktívnu a potrebnú," uviedol na letisku generálny riaditeľ TASR Jaroslav Rezník.

Študenti v súťaži Siemens Young Generation Award predviedli množstvo skvelých projektov, ktoré majú aj reálne uplatnenie v praxi. Pri príležitosti slávnostného odovzdania cien mladých elektrotechnikov to 16. apríla povedal Marián Hrica, riaditeľ divízie Automatizovaná technika a pohony Siemens (SYGA). Na pôde Fakulty Elektrotechniky a informatiky Slovenskej technickej univerzity (STU) si už po piaty raz prevzali ocenenia SYGA za svoje inovačné nápady študenti stredných technických odborných škôl a učilíšť s elektrotechnickým zameraním na Slovensku. Cieľom súťaže je pripraviť jej účastníkov na prechod od teoretických vedomostí z učebníc k potrebám bežnej priemyselnej praxe, a to pomocou práce na zadaných projektoch.

Dodávka technológií potrebných pri výstavbe tunela Branisko sa predražila trojnásobne, a to z pôvodných 670 miliónov Sk (2.72 milióna eur), čo bola víťazna ponuka, na 1.97 miliardy Sk (60.93 milióna eur). Na tlačovej besede to nedávno po rokovanií vlády na margo začatého trestného stíhania desiatich osôb v kauze tunela Branisko vyhlásil predseda vlády SR Robert Fico. Podľa jeho slov sa prvýkrát v modernej histórii Slovenska vytvoril plastický obraz toho, ako bolo možné tunelovať štátne prostriedky, predovšetkým cestou fiktívnych faktúr na práce, ktoré neboli vykonané. Tie boli podľa neho následne preplatené Slovenskou správou ciest (SSC). Peniaze potom odchádzali na účet do Švajčiarska, kde boli prerozdeľované na osobné účty ľudí zo Slovenska. Premiér mieni, že keď bude prípad dotiahnutý do konca, tak sa slovenskej verejnosti ukáže klasický spôsob, ako sa na štátnych zákazkách dali vytunelovať stámilióny korún. Fico pripomenul, že tento prípad je výsledkom intenzívnej slovensko-švajčiarskej spolupráce.

Americkí technickí experti z Národného úradu pre jadrovú bezpečnosť USA prezentovali v polovici apríla na Donovaloch a následne darovali tri prenosné analyzátory kovu slovenským colníkom. Dva z nich získa Colný úrad (CÚ) v Michalovciach a jeden bratislavský CÚ. Cena jedného zariadenia sa pohybuje od 27,000 USD do 30,000 USD. Prístroje poskytnú colníkom rýchly a neagresívny spôsob identifikácie kovov, čím sa predídne protiprávnej preprave strategických komodít. Malý ručný analyzátor zabezpečuje rýchlu, nedeštruktívnu elementárnu analýzu prepravy kovov, šrotu a zariadení. Jednoducho sa transportuje a zabezpečuje colníkom alebo personálu iného policajného úradu rýchly a presný spôsob kontroly obsahu prepravy a overovanie dokumentov. Okrem toho identifikuje zliatiny i zariadenia, ktoré súvisia so zbraňami hromadného ničenia.

Malé firmy sa na Slovensku euro netešia, avizuje v titulku článku denník Hospodárske noviny a pokračuje, že väčšina malých podnikateľov a živnostníkov začne s prípravami na zavedenie eura až po konečnom rozhodnutí o vstupe Slovenska do eurozóny. O tom, či Slovensko prijme euro od 1. januára 2009, by sa malo rozhodnúť začiatkom mája. Pre časť firiem to už môže byť na kvalitné prípravy neskoro. Dôležitá je veľkosť firmy. Pre malé môže stačiť na prípravy aj kratší čas. Pre väčšie je pol roka málo. Mnohé firmy si náročnosť prechodu na euro uvedomujú, preto sa z jeho prijatia veľmi netešia. Veľké spoločnosti sa na spoločnú menu pozerajú inak a mnohé sa na ňu pripravujú od roku 2007. Výhodou veľkých firiem je aj skutočnosť, že so zavádzaním novej meny majú skúsenosti z iných krajín.

Gigantická 33 metrov vysoká socha Ježiša Krista, ktorú chce nad Prešovom postaviť primátor Pavel Hagyari, už má svoju definitívnu podobu. Jej model nedávno predstavil prešovský primátor. Socha, ktorá bude o meter vyššia ako najznámejšia existujúca socha Ježiša nad brazílskym Rio de Janeirom, by mala do Prešova lákať viac turistov. Socha zobrazí stojaceho Ježiša so symbolickým gestom otvorených rúk. Náklady na stavbu sochy mali dosiahnuť približne 30 miliónov korún. Peniaze chce vedenie mesta získať od sponzorov a z verejnej zbierky.

TASR a slovenské časopisy

Výsledky testov DNA potvrdili, že v Bratislave je pochovaný Jozef Tiso

Bratislava (TASR) – Výsledky genetických testov telesných pozostatkov prezidenta Slovenskej republiky v rokoch 1939-1945 potvrdili, že v Bratislave je pochovaný Jozef Tiso. Vo vyhlásení pre médiá to 18. apríla uviedol Stanislav Májek zo Spoločnosti Andreja Hlinku. Porovnanie DNA údajných Tisových pozostatkov a DNA jeho synovca Štefana Tisu podľa Májeka vykonala firma DNA - Confidence vo Viedni. Výsledky testov údajne potvrdili

rodovú príbuznosť a pravosť exhumovaných telesných pozostatkov. Pred bratislavským Justičným palácom sa stretlo viac ako 20 priaznivcov Jozefa Tisa, aby si pripomenuli výročie jeho popravy, ktorá sa uskutočnila 18. apríla 1947 v skorých ranných hodinách na dvore Justičného paláca. Ešte pred spomienkou pred Justičným palácom sa zhruba 20 Tisových priaznivcov stretlo pri jeho hrobe na bratislavskom Martinskem cintoríne.

Tradičná spomienková oslava slovenskej štátnosti v NYC

Pokračovanie zo str. 20

Oslavy sme ukončili zaspievaním hymnických piesní God Bless America a Hej Slováci za doprovodu hudobnej skupiny Kontakty. Na úspechu a príprave tohto pekného podujatia sa podieľali hlavne manželia Bilikovi, Daitoví, Šulákoví, Škrkoňoví a Mária Božeková.

Henrieta Daitová
tajomníčka I. Zboru Slovenskej ligy



Na snímke zľava: Jozef Juráši z hudobno-spevackej skupiny Kontakty; Dr. Ľudovít Pavlo, doživotný predseda Slovenskej ligy v Amerike; Henrieta Daitová, tajomníčka I. Zboru SLvA; Milan Dait, predseda I. Zboru SLvA; Nina Holá, tajomníčka SLvA; Jozef Bilík, pokladník I. Zboru SLvA a Michal Zákutný.



Záber z pohostenia počas osláv slovenskej štátnosti v hale kostola sv. Jána Nepomuckého.



Katolícky fraternalistický dvojtýždenník

Jednota



ÚRADNÝ ORGÁN PRVEJ KATOLÍCKEJ SLOVENSKEJ JEDNOTY V SPOJENÝCH ŠTÁTOCH A V KANADE

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FOTO TASR/AFP

Pápež Benedikt XVI. sa vrátil domov zo 6-dňovej návštevy Spojených štátov. Lietadlo s pápežom pristálo na rímskom letisku Ciampino v pondelok 21. apríla 2008. Na snímke Pápež Benedikt XVI. prichádza na celebrowanie omše na bejzbalovom štadióne vo Washingtone 17. apríla 2008.

USA sa so Svätým Otcom rozlúčili ako s "poslom pokoja a slobody"

Vatikán (RV, TK KBS) – Krátko pred 11. hodinou v pondelok 21. apríla pristálo lietadlo so Svätým Otcom na rímskom letisku Ciampino. V nedeľu večer sa s ním na newyorskom letisku Johna F. Kennedyho rozlúčil viceprezident USA Dick Cheney a predstavitelia Konferencie katolíckych biskupov USA. Prítomných bolo aj asi 5 tisíc veriacich z diecézy Brooklyn, v ktorej pôsobnosť sa letisko nachádza. V záverečnom príhovore označil Cheney Svätého Otca za "posla pokoja a slobody". Poukázal na to, že Benedikt XVI. prišiel do krajiny, ktorá čelí mnohým výzvam, ale zároveň je nesmierne požehnaná. Darom, ktorý priniesol, je podľa viceprezidenta univerzálne posolstvo nádeje a spásy: "Prehovorili ste k Američanom s výstižnosťou a citom, a pre mnohých boli uplynulé dni časom premýšľania a osobnej obnovy. Či už pri vašej priamej prítomnosti, alebo počúvajúc vás na diaľku, milióny ľudí našli vo vašich slovách nádej proti zúfalstvu, istotu uprostred zmätku, a silu pre svoje vlastné cesty."

Pápež sa vo svojom príhovore poďakoval za pohostinnosť, s ktorou ho Amerika privítala a uviedol, že preňho bolo radosťou zažiť vieru a oddanosť tamtojšej katolíckej komunity. Pristavil sa pri niektorých kľúčových momentoch svojej v poradí 8. zahraničnej apoštolskej cesty, ako boli návšteva v sídle OSN, či modlitba na mieste, kde pred teroristickým útokom v roku 2001 stálo Svetové obchodné centrum a dodal: "Modlím sa za všetkých ľudí Ameriky a na celom svete, aby budúcnosť priniesla viac bratstva a solidarity, rast vo vzájomnej úcte a obnovenú dôveru v Boha, nášho nebeského Otca".

Počas preletu vzdušným priestorom jednotlivých štátov Svätý Otec zaslal pozdravné telegramy ich najvyšším predstaviteľom - prezidentovi USA Georgeovi W. Bushovi, kanadskej generálnej guvernérke Michaëlle Jeanovej, francúzskemu prezidentovi Nicolasovi Sarkozymu, ako aj talianskemu prezidentovi Giorgiovi Napolitanovi. Všetky telegramy vyjadrovali duchovnú blízkosť Benedikta XVI. jednotlivým národom a ujistenie o modlitbách za ich dobro a prosperitu.

Tradičná spomienková oslava slovenskej štátnosti v NYC

Motto: Bože, čos ráčil Slovenskému rodu po mnohoročnom ťažkom utrpení

láska vrátil slobodnú zas hrudu...

I. Zbor Slovenskej ligy v NYC za spolupráce Slovenskej ligy v Amerike, Spolku sv. Štefana IKSJ, Spolku sv. Matúša IKSJ, Slovenského Katolíckeho Sokola a ostatných fraternalistických slovenských spolkov usporiadal dôstojnú oslavu za bohatej účasti oddaných Slovákov z New Yorku, New Jersey, Connecticutu a Pensylvánie.

Oslava sa začala slávnostnou svätou omšou v Slovenskom kostole sv. Jána Nepomuckého v New York City, ktorú odslúžil za nášho prvého prezidenta Dr. Jozefa Tisu, dôstojný otec Štefan Chanas.

Pre nás sú tieto horespomenuté oslavy radostnou príležitosťou osláviť dlhé boje za samostatnosť Slovákov. Nemalú zásluhu na víťazstve za slovenskú myšlienku má aj dlhoročná práca Slovenskej ligy v Amerike, ktorá udržiavala v slovenských emigrantoch slovenské povedomie.

Oslava pokračovala predrieknutím modlitby a zaspievaním americkej a slovenskej štátnej hymny. Hlavným rečníkom bol predseda I. Zboru Slovenskej ligy Milan R. Dait, ktorý svojím príspevkom zaujal všetkých prítomných. Program vyvrcholil do živej diskusie a príhovorem doživotného predsedu Slovenskej ligy v Amerike Dr. Ľudovíta Pavlu.

V kultúrnej vložke vystúpila básňami od Andreja Sládkoviča: Nehaňte ľud môj a od Gorazda Zvonického: Náš prvý prezident, Henrieta Daitová. Renáta Ivaška vystúpila básňou od Žarnova Pozdrav a za tým spolu s manželom Jozefom nám spestrili program zaspievaním piesní o Rodnej zemi a árie z opery Gejzu Dusíka.



Milan Dait počas príhovoru.

Pokračovanie na str. 19

Duch Svätý, oheň večnej lásky

Svetoslav Veigl

Duch Svätý od počiatku v Cirkvi pôsobí zjavuje Vzkrieseného, jeho slová spôsoby. On, ktorý posvätil v lone matky Jána Krstiteľa, predchodcu Ježiša Krista, Spasiteľa.

Zmŕtvychvstalý dal Ducha svojho apoštolom, by odpúšťali hriechy v mene Božom. Na Turíce zostúpil Duch na nich silou novou, zrod Cirkvi vznietil pod vedením apoštolov,

by Cirkev upevnil a stále posväcoval, aby s ním ustavične rástla, bola večne nová. Darca života, čo pomáha narodiť sa znova, Duch pravdy, Utešiteľ do každého dvora.

Pretvára všetko, čoho sa dotkne svojím líčom, zamknuté srdcia otvára zlatým kľúčom. Tak žiaria svety, na ktoré s láskou padá vždy láska jeho žiariaca, vždy láska jeho mladá.

Kto sa mu otvorí, vedie ho ku svätosti, po vzkriesení z mŕtvych nás celkom omilostí. Dáva sa všetkým, ktorí v neho veria, na slnku kríža, na nebi utrpenia.

Zo zbierky Plnosť času