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PAS Dancers in Goral Costumes.

PÁS's Drotár Concert

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

What a concert! On Sunday, November 23, 2008, "PÁS," the Pittsburgh Area Slovak Folk Ensemble treated its audience to a fabulous and very unique performance entitled "Drotár," at the Antonian Theatre at Carlow University. The enthusiastic crowd would concur that the troupe put on quite a show of traditional songs and dances that was both entertaining and educational.

BACKGROUND - A LITTLE HISTORY

The concert centered on the theme of the *Drotár*, or tinker. As portrayed in the concert program, many Slovak *staré baby* (old grandmothers) remembered when the tinkers used to come to their villages and would announce their arrival with the words:

"Hrce misky, drotovat! (Pots and bowls to tinker!)"

Life as a Tinker was a common occupation of men in Slovakia during the Early Modern Era of European history. This portrayal of the life of the *drotár* dated from the 18th century, the time of Maria Teresa, the beloved Empress of Austria and Queen of Hungary.

Many of these Tinkers came from the relatively poor areas of Kysuce and Trenčín in northwest Slovakia. Because times were tough in their homeland, these Slovak Tinkers roamed not only in Slovakia and other parts of Hungary, but throughout Europe, in search of work. They traveled from place to place, carrying everything they needed in a toolbox on their backs, which they wore like a knapsack. They repaired items with wire, and mended dishes and other ceramic and tin objects, which were held together with wire at this time. The Tinkers also sold objects made of tin and wire such as pots and pans, whisks, sieves, strainers, trays, ladles, skewers, cake and cookie tins, cutters, trivets, mousetraps, and other useful household goods. The *drotár* also was a source of information about distant places;

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From the Desk of the Executive Secretary:

March for Life

January 22, 2009 is the 36th Annual Right to Life March in Washington DC. FCSU along with FCSLA are offering free transportation for this very important event. Our goal for this March is to fill two buses with individuals who will march along side the many Pro-Life Organizations and American citizens who support this mission.

With a new administration taking over in January it is most important for us to support the position of the Pro Life Movement. The theme for the 2009 March is: REMEMBER – the *Life Principles* mean "Equal Care" with No Exceptions!

Please join us in supporting this very important March. If you wish to reserve a seat please contact Kenneth Arendt, Executive Secretary of FCSU at 1-800-533-6682 or Sue Ann Seich, Fraternal & Youth Director of FCSLA at 1-800-464-4642, EXT 1051 before December 20, 2008.



From the Desk of the Executive Secretary:

An Important Message to Our Members

Due to the recent news concerning our nation's financial crisis and economic conditions, the Society's Investment Committee wants to reassure you that the FCSU remains in strong financial condition.

If you have been reviewing the various financial reports that have appeared in our publication reflecting the reports filed with the various Insurance Departments of the states in which the Society is licensed, you will note that in addition to our overall strong surplus we have

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FCSU LIFE

TAKE ADVANTAGE OF OUR 2 or 3 YEAR PAYMENT PLAN ON A SINGLE PREMIUM LIFE INSURANCE PLAN

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Act now! Don't delay!

Contact your local branch officer or call the home office at 1-800-533-6682 for further details. Visit us on the web at www.fcsu.com or email us at fcsu@aol.com

Insights and Viewpoints



St. Vincent Archabbey — Homilies Father Champion P. Gavaler; Father Demetrius R. Dumm O.D.B.

January 18, 2009

Second Sunday in Ordinary Time

John 1: 35-42

Gospel Summary

John the Baptist, standing with two of his disciples, upon seeing Jesus exclaims, "Behold, the Lamb of God." When Jesus notices that John's disciples are following him, he says to them, "What are you looking for?" They reply, "Rabbi, where are

you staying?" Jesus responds, "Come, and you will see." Andrew, one of the disciples, goes to find his brother Simon, tells him they have found the Messiah, and introduces his brother to Jesus. Jesus looks at him and says, "You are Simon the son of John; you will be called Cephas (Peter)."

Life Implications

There is a true story about a professor who was invited to give a lecture at a major conference on religion. The subject of his lecture was the nature of God. His many hours of research were rewarded by the enthusiastic response he received upon completion of the lecture. On the flight back to his university, however, his euphoric satisfaction about his work was shattered when it dawned on him, as he later reported: "I talked to everyone about God, but God."

We can easily have an experience similar to that of the professor as he was preparing his lecture about God. With a little research we can discover many interesting, even beautiful things about Jesus and his disciples.

Thus, in today's gospel passage, we discover that when the two disciples ask Jesus where he is staying or dwelling the question isn't simply about a street address. John uses the same Greek verb (translated as "staying or dwelling") when Jesus at the Last Supper tells his disciples that he "dwells" in the Father and the Father "dwells" in him (Jn 14: 10-11). We also discover that when Jesus says "Come, and you will see," the essential meaning of "seeing" is the seeing of faith (Jn 9). Only with that seeing can the disciples know where Jesus truly dwells, with-in the Father.

Thus far there is no life-implication for us beyond appreciation of a narrative about Jesus and his disciples. A life-changing implication occurs only when we realize that Jesus is addressing each of us today in as personal a way as he addressed the two disciples. The gospel is essentially about an encounter with the Risen Lord now, not about historical knowledge, however orthodox, about Jesus. The historical-critical method of scholarship (like John the Baptist) can give us valuable information about Jesus, but this knowledge cannot enable us to see Jesus in faith -- that seeing is a gift of the Spirit.

Because faith means a personal union of friendship with Christ through his Spirit, life implications will be unique and particular for each person. Nevertheless, from the life of Christ and the lives of the saints, certain patterns emerge that are actualized in the particularity of each person's life. Union with the Risen Lord means to share his relationship with the Father. It means that each of us is able to hear with Christ "You are my beloved" and to say with Christ "Thy will be done."

To be in communion with Christ means to pray, always and everywhere. The second reading of today's Mass (1 Cor 7: 32-35) shows us that a disciple's personal union with Christ through his Spirit is the foundation of choices about moral behavior. Finally, we see that through union with Christ the saints are not defeated by the setbacks of life. Saint Paul speaks for them all when he wrote: "What will separate us from the love of Christ? Will anguish, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or the sword? No, in all these things we conquer overwhelmingly through him who loved us" (Rom 8:35-37).

January 25 2009

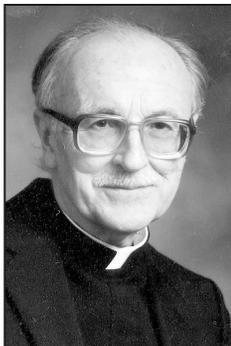
Third Sunday in Ordinary Time

Mark 1:14-20

Gospel Summary

Today's gospel tells us that Jesus went to Galilee to begin his messianic ministry. We have become so accustomed to hearing this that we no longer notice how odd it was. Jerusalem was the religious and political center of Israel and anyone announcing a new future for Israel would have been expected to declare his intentions there. As Jesus' ministry develops, however, it becomes clear that Jerusalem was the one place in Israel that was least likely to accept his message. The powerful people in the capital city had far too much to protect. They could tolerate only a "controlled" reform.

Mark wastes no time in pointing out the implications of the public mission of Jesus in Galilee: "This is the time of fulfillment." All the hopes and dreams of Israel are about to be realized. The thousand plus years of waiting are over. This is so because "The kingdom of God is at hand." The hopes of Israel had been centered in the



Champion P. Gavaler,
O.S.B.

promised messianic kingdom through which God would deliver his people from bondage and bring everlasting peace. At long last the promise is being fulfilled; the Messiah has arrived.

But the kingdom that Jesus had in mind was both far less and far more than anyone in Israel had imagined--far less, because it would not mean the end of the hated Roman occupation; far more, because it would reveal a Messiah who is the Son of God. Thus, as their small dreams were crushed, unimaginable divine dreams were being substituted. To nurture these dreams, Jesus would choose, not clever politicians, but simple honest fishermen. He knew that for his purposes a good and generous heart was more important than a proud and ambitious head.

Life Implications

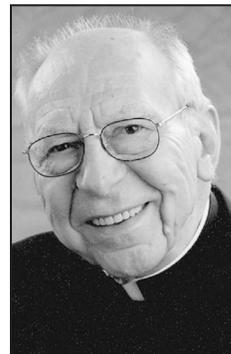
This gospel seems especially appropriate for the early years of a new millennium, for we are painfully aware that, though 2000 years have passed, we have not yet seen the fulfillment of God's promises. The solution to this dilemma is the recognition that the fulfillment envisioned by Jesus is constantly being offered to us. It is a "rolling" fulfillment that each person must discover in his or her own lifetime. As such, it should be the primary project of our lives. Jesus has come, but he is also still coming, and each one of us must ask whether he is being welcomed. Fulfillment is offered; it is never imposed.

To live in the expectation of fulfillment is to live in the bittersweet world of promise. What we hope for is still awaited, and that is painful; but we also live in joyful expectation of what will be, and that is comforting beyond words. We may be struggling in a dark valley, but the horizon is illuminated by God's utterly trustworthy promise.

We note that Jesus called his first disciples from their workplaces. This is a reminder that there is a purpose in life beyond work and that this larger purpose is found in our response to God's call to walk with him. This means taking time for prayer and gradually getting to know the Lord as the very center of our lives. For we must come to understand that it is in him alone that the value of our work and the precious gift of other people will be found again and again...unto eternity.

Reflections on Our Christianity Msgr. Edward V. Rosack

Galatians-1



Msgr. Edward V. Rosack

In his epistle to the Galatians Paul makes two points: 1) he is an apostle of Jesus Christ, as true and as valid as an apostle as those who were with Jesus Christ during his ministry; 2) he rejects the assertion that the Judaeo-Christians in the Galatian community should observe the Mosaic law, holding that they are free in conscience from following that Law.

He writes, "Some who wish to alter the gospel of Christ must have confused you. For even if we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel not in accord with the one we delivered to you, let a curse be upon him!" (Galatians 1:7-8)

"I assure you, brothers, the gospel I proclaimed to you is no mere human invention. I did not receive it from any man, nor was I schooled in it. It came by revelation from Jesus Christ." (1:11-12)

Paul goes on to say that he stayed with Cephas (Peter) for 15 days and that he had met "James, the brother of the Lord." (1:18-19)

Opposition to Paul centered not so much upon the doctrine he preached but, rather, his establishing Christian communities among the Gentiles (non-Jews). The Jewish Christians demanded respect from the Gentiles for the Mosaic Law and wanted Titus, a Greek Christian and follower of Paul, circumcised. Paul refused saying, "We did not submit to them for

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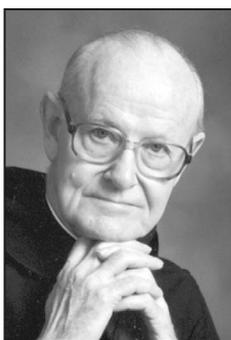
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Demetrius R. Dumm
O.S.B.

PÁS's Drotár Concert

continued from page 1

he shared interesting and exciting stories, no doubt, some of which may have been exaggerated to tell a good tale.

Slovaks considered the life of a *drotár* to be a worthy occupation, and the special skills were usually passed down the generations, from father (*otec*) and grandfather (*dedo*) to one's son or grandson. Fathers and son often worked or even traveled together.

The concert program noted the special custom associated with the birth of a son to a family of Tinkers. The family put the newborn infant on a "long-handled board," and then put the baby through an open window of the home. The family then collectively recited the Slovak expression, "*Svetom moje svetom*" (Set out on a journey to the world). The family anticipated that the child would one day make his way in the world, and make it his own.

The Slovak Tinkers could be found throughout Europe, everywhere from Russia to France and Italy. Their humble profession continued until the early 20th century, and during their heyday, as many as 5-10,000 Slovak *drotári* roamed around Europe.

THE OPENING – Act One

The concert itself was a story of the life of the *drotár*, but it was also a portrayal of the different songs and dances of the various regions of Slovakia where the *drotár* journeyed. Done in four acts, each portrayed a particular region or theme, and also the various customs done during holidays and various celebrations.

The opening scene depicted a *drotár* learning his craft. Played by Juraj Staško (George Stasko), the *drotár* formed a heart out of wire and boldly sang out his song, "*Ja som dobrý remeselník*" (I am a good craftsman). Following this was the *Drotáriček Tanec*, the quaint Tinker's Dance. Dressed in colorful regional costumes, the Senior Ensemble performed a series of intricate step dances from the mountainous *Gorale* region of northern Slovakia, near the Polish border. The children's Junior Ensemble then put on a cute little play. Finally, the *drotár* was on his way.



A Christmas and New Year Message



George F. Matta
National Treasurer

As we prepared for Christmas Day, the birthday of our Lord, Jesus Christ, most of us were reminded of the old saying "Peace on Earth and Good Will to All." It's too bad, that saying is practiced only during the birthday of our Lord, Jesus Christ, and not throughout the entire year.

I must admit, that during the Christmas season, most people have a nicer disposition towards others and appear to be happier.

During Christmas and New Years Day, it is so gratifying to see the churches crowded, just like the old times. With all the difficulties we face in these days, perhaps more people will find comfort and return to church more frequently.

On behalf of my wife Florence, my family and myself we wish all of you the blessings of the Holy Infant, Jesus Christ, and a Blessed and Healthy New Year.

George F. Matta, National Treasurer

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	Copy Date
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 21	MONDAY, JANUARY 12
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 4	MONDAY, JANUARY 26
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 18	MONDAY, FEBRUARY 9

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.

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PAS Girls singing.

EARLY SPRING – Act Two

The Second Act was set during the early spring, and featured the customs of *Fašiangy* (Shrovetide or Mardi Gras). The men performed a Stick Dance (*Palickový Tanec*) from the town of Dobré Nive, and they recited the refrain: "Jump men! Leap high as the ceiling so the hemp will grow tall in the fields."

The women followed with the loud Girls' Stamping Dance (*Dievčenský Tanec*) and stomped their feet to the delight of the crowd. The Children then enacted a series of *Hry a Riekanky* (plays and sayings, complete with riddles, rhyme and dances). The Couples' Tossing Dance (*Vyhadzivaňa*) followed, depicting the custom of the Trenčín area, where the men would toss their female partners as high as possible so as to ensure a bountiful harvest. Songs and dances from central Slovakia followed, such as *Ked ja na Toryse* (When I was on the Torysa River), the *Tota Helpa Csardás* from the Horehronie region, the song *Pridi ty Šuhajko* (Come You Young Man), and the ancient ritual dance of Spring – *Jar*.

EASTERN SLOVAKIA – Act Three

After a brief intermission, the program continued with a rendition called *Hviezdnata Noc* (Starry Night), which represented traditional Eastern Slovak dance. It included a men's slapping dance (*čapaš*), a *czardaš*, and a *kručena*, a whirling dance.

The dances were a prelude to a traditional wedding ceremony, one of the most important of customs which cemented family life in Slovakia. The portrayal included the moving scene where the bride and groom knelt before their parents to bid their farewells and beckon forgiveness for any transgressions they committed. The climax of the ceremony was the *parta*, when the ladies of the family remove the bride's elaborately decorated headdress and replace it with the *čepec* (a matron's bonnet). The traditional bridal dance (*Redovy*) followed, with all who dance with the bride throwing in a coin to help the young couple get started in life.

The wedding ceremony then concluded with the energetic and fast-paced *Šarišská Polka*, from that eastern Slovak region of Šariš.

THE QUEEN'S GIFT – Act IV

The final act portrayed the celebration of the birth of the child Joseph II to Maria Teresa. First, PÁS performed several lively dances from the Detva region of central Slovakia, where the troupe will be performing in the summer of 2009. The child's birth was announced, and a great cheer of joy echoed. Then the *drotári* (Tinkers) presented the newborn babe with the gift of a heart made of wire, and the Queen declared that henceforth, all Tinkers would be free of any form of serfdom.

The program concluded with an array of dances of jubilation, folk songs, and the always popular *Zbojnický Odzemok* (The Robbers' Leaping Dance, famous from the time of the Slovak Robin Hood, *Juraj Jánošík*), which featured a dance with the long-handled wooden axe known as a *valaška*.

CONCLUSION

The performance ended in a storm of applause that was well-deserved. PÁS chose to stage this wonderful drama to celebrate its thirty-fifth year as one of Pittsburgh's premier ethnic song and dance groups.

PÁS owes much of its success to the devoted work of all its members and their families, as especially, John and Angela Lipchick, who direct the Ensemble. The members all deserve mention as well, and are listed here alphabetically.

Senior Ensemble

Milenka (formerly Kopanic) Feighner, Maggie Fero, Nancy Hart, Adrienne Jumba, Zach Jumba, John Lipchik, Jr., Joe Lipchick, Kristin Miara, Anna Miskis-Neilson, Anna Nowak, Joe Pacacha, Dee Pacacha, Michael Pacacha, Mary Ann Parana, Francis Parana, Marge Rose, Jeremy Samek, John Samek, George Stasko, Alissa Tilger, Jessica Wolf, and Mike Wolf

Junior Ensemble

Bella Fero, Emily Fero, Rozie Fero, Becky Korinko, Emily Miara, Lily Miara, Christina Pacacha, Allie Samek, Alana Samek, Christopher Samek, Noah Samek, Toby Samek, Martina Stasko, Marissa Ann Tilger, and Xavier Michael Wolf.

With its performance of *Drotár*, PÁS hoped to raise some money to help fund its trip to Detva, Slovakia, where they will perform with some of the best folk groups from across the country. Despite making some progress through fund-raisers over the last few months, they can only sell so many hoagies. PÁS still needs more donations to help make their trip to Slovakia possible. If you would like to help support their most worthy cause, please keep them in mind when you think about whom you would wish to assist.

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

For more information about PÁS please visit and explore its new website at www.pasfolkensemble.weebly.com

Insights and Viewpoints

Reflections on Our Christianity

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a moment." (2:5)

Paul won. "Those who were the acknowledged pillars, James, Cephas, and John, gave Barnabas and me the handclasp of friendship, signifying that we should go to the Gentiles as they to the Jews." (2:9)

Before the above could be made known publicly, Paul relates that when he came to Antioch "I directly withstood him (Peter) because he was clearly in the wrong." What had happened was this. There were two types of Christians: Judaeo-Christians and Gentile-Christians, Christians coming from the Jewish religion and Christians coming from non-Jewish religions. Peter had been dining with the non-Jewish Christians and partaking of their menus. When Jewish-Christians came upon Peter and his Gentile Christians at dinner, Peter realizing the sensibilities of the Jewish Christians relative to clean and unclean foods and who had not yet been informed about the dispensation from the Mosaic Law, quit eating of the Gentile-Christian menu in deference to the Jewish Christians' clean and unclean foods' regulations.

Paul publicly criticized Peter for not "being straightforward about the truth of the gospel." (2:14) In this instance, Paul was the direct approach person and Peter the sensitive person. Paul tells Peter, You are a Jew and are living according to Gentile ways. Why, then, do you want the Gentiles to adopt Jewish ways? You as a Jew are free. Why cannot Gentiles be equally free? If you don't keep Jewish observance, why should the Gentiles? Your withdrawing from the Gentile-Christian menu sends a mixed signal to everyone.

With respect to the Mosaic Law, Paul had this to say: "All who depend on observance of the (Mosaic) law, on the other hand, are under a curse...It should be obvious that no one is justified in God's sight by the (Mosaic) law. For 'the just man shall live by faith (in Jesus Christ)'." (3:10-11)

"Before faith (in Jesus Christ) came we were under the constraint of the (Mosaic) law, locked in until the faith that was coming should be revealed. In other words, the law was our monitor until Christ came to bring about our justification through faith. Each of you is a son of God because of your faith in Christ Jesus. All of you who have been baptized into Christ have clothed yourself with him. (3:23-27)

"God sent forth his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to deliver from the law those who were subjected to it, so that we might receive our status as adopted sons." (4:4-5)

Paul gets personal.

"My physical condition was a challenge which you did not despise or brush aside in disgust. On the contrary, you took me to yourselves as an angel of God, even as if I had been Christ Jesus! What has happened to your openhearted spirit? I can testify on your behalf that if it were possible you would have plucked out your eyes and given them to me. Have I become your enemy just because I tell you the truth?

In chapter 4, verses 21-31 (see footnote) Paul creates the allegory of Sarah and Hagar. (Gn.21, 8-21, Gn. 16:1-16).

Genesis 17:19-22: "Nevertheless, your wife Sarah is to bear you a son, and you shall call him Isaac. I will maintain my covenant with him as an everlasting pact, to be his God and the God of his descendants after him. As for Ishmael, (son of Hagar) I am heeding you: I hereby bless him. I will make him fertile and will multiply him exceedingly. He shall become the father of twelve chieftains and I will make of him a great nation. But my covenant I will maintain with Isaac, whom Sarah shall bear to you by this time next year."



An Important Message to Our Members

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additional reserves to help cover unexpected downturns in the financial market. This helps assure our continued financial strength.

The Society's Investment Committee has been meeting and staying abreast with all the many financial events as they take place. As you are already aware, the Society has always taken a conservative approach in our management of our Investment Portfolio. The investment policy that the Society has in place has served the Society well, and the Society will continue to exercise caution in the future. This is your Society. Management's thoughts and efforts are always in the best interests of our membership.

Those of our members that have annuities with the FCSU will notice that your interest earnings continue to be credited and your balance is growing. This is in direct contrast with those investors that have investments in the Mutual Funds and the Stock Market. Perhaps it is time to open or add funds to a FCSU Annuity!

Thank you for your continued loyalty to the First Catholic Slovak Union.

Trnava Church Becomes a Basilica

Stanislav J. Kirschbaum, FRSC

Slovakia's "Little Rome," as Trnava is known to Slovaks, makes history once again. His Holiness, Pope Benedict XVI, on 16 November 2008 designated the Church of St. Nicholas as a minor basilica (more correctly "*Basilica minor*" – more below), the tenth in Slovakia. It is an important designation even if the term minor may suggest a meaning other than what it has here. The term basilica is Greek in origin and it describes a large public building. In the history of architecture, the basilica, as a structure, underwent many changes. The Roman Catholic Church made its own contribution to architectural history (with St. Peter's in Rome in particular), but more importantly, it decided to use the term to designate churches that were given special ceremonial rites by the Pope. The status of basilica thus gives that particular place of worship certain privileges and rights, which are conferred by papal brief. Among other things, it creates a special link with the Vatican. This is the honour that was granted to Trnava's Church of St. Nicholas, known to the locals as "*Hrubý kostol*."

Basilicas are divided into two classes, major and minor. The four major basilicas are all in Rome: St. Peter's; St. John Lateran; St. Paul Outside the Walls; and St. Mary Major. Formerly, they were known as "patriarchal" basilicas because they were associated with ancient patriarchal sees: Constantinople, Rome, Alexandria, and Antioch, respectively. All other basilicas in Christendom are minor basilicas but some also have the title of "patriarchal;" two are linked to St. Francis of Assisi, situated near his home town, and two are associated with bishops who have the title of patriarch: Venice and Aquileia. It should also be noted that four minor basilicas are designated "pontifical" (meaning papal); they are situated in Pompei, Bari, Padua, and Loreto. All of these are in Italy. The majority of minor basilicas around the world include cathedrals, many actually parish churches, shrines, and abbatial or conventual churches. Some oratories, like St. Joseph's Oratory in Montreal, and other semi-private places of worship have also been raised to the status of a basilica. In the New World, the first basilica so designated by the Pope was the Cathédrale Notre Dame in Quebec City in 1874, followed by the Church of St. Mary (now Basilica of St. Mary) in Minneapolis in 1926. Many of the world's basilicas are notable shrines, often places of significant pilgrimages. The papal or major basilicas outrank in precedence all other churches. However, the cathedral (or co-cathedral) of a bishop is ahead of all other churches in a diocese even if they have the title of basilica. In Trnava, the Cathedral of St. John the Baptist, one of the most magnificent examples of Baroque art in Central Europe, is known as the "*Mater ecclesiarum Archidioecesis Tyrnaviensis*" (Mother of all churches of the Archdiocese of Trnava) and thus ranks above the new basilica.

Before Trnava's Church of St. Nicholas was designated a basilica, nine churches in Slovakia had been named basilicas in Bardejov, Kežmarok, Levoča, Nitra, Ľutina, Rajecká Lesná, Šaštín, Staré Hory, and Vranov nad Topľou. Most of these are places of Marian pilgrimage and two played a significant role during the Communist period when they became centres for nation-wide religious dissidence, namely Levoča and Šaštín. The elevation of Trnava's Church of St. Nicholas to the rank of a basilica marks a further strengthening of the Marian tradition in Slovakia. The reason is the presence in a lateral Baroque altar of a painting of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Trnava, which is said to have drawn tears in 1708; it was shown that year in a procession to the townspeople by the then archbishop of Trnava, and is credited with ending the plague that had up to that point decimated half of the town's population. This painting is known in Trnava as a "miraculous" painting and is already the object of pilgrimage, especially at the time of the Marian novena that ends on 21 November with the celebration of the Feast of Our Lady, a date that had been declared a religious holiday by the authorities in Trnava in 1708. On 16 November 2008, the metropolitan-archbishop of Trnava, Ján Sokol, led a procession with the painting throughout Trnava to celebrate the elevation of the Church of St. Nicholas to the rank of basilica. On 21 November, the papal *nuncius* in Slovakia is to celebrate the end of the novena.

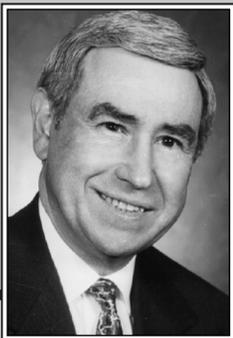
The Basilica of St. Nicholas was built between 1380 and 1430 in the early Gothic style on the site of an earlier church that, since 1260, was known as the church of St. Nicholas, patron saint of tradespeople. From 1543 to 1820, it was the church of the archbishopric of Ostrihom (Esztergom), which had moved to Trnava after the Magyar defeat at Mohács in 1526 and the subsequent occupation of Hungary by the Ottoman Turks. It faces eastward and was built on the highest point in Trnava. As indicated many times in previous articles, its two magnificent spires, built between 1526 and 1567, dominate from afar the skyline of historic Trnava. On 6 November 2008, its two bells, cast in 1569 and 1583, known as the Bell of St. Barbara and the Bell of St. Stephen, were re-installed in the southern spire after its renovation. The interior is Gothic where many Baroque additions were introduced when the structure underwent changes. Its main altar at the front of the church is modest in comparison to the lateral Baroque altars.

Let us hope that this new basilica is yet another reason for the civic authorities of Trnava to appreciate and respect the historic heritage that is found within its historic walls and not succumb to re-development with its inevitable cultural vandalism as happened at the University of Trnava.

**If each member would sign up just one new member,
we could double our Society immediately**

THINK ABOUT IT!

MONEY MANAGEMENT & TAX TIPS



By Joseph T. Senko

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



How Long Should You Retain Financial Records?

Every year, taxpayers wade through piles of financial documents to find the information they need to file their taxes. But how long should one hold on to these records in case of a tax audit or similar concern down the road? There are a few hard and fast rules, but here are some general guidelines you can follow.

Don't Tear Up Those Tax Returns

There are good reasons to hold on to copies of your tax returns indefinitely. They contain a lot of valuable information that you may need in the future, including a record of past income, deductions, or taxes paid. Supporting documents, such as cancelled checks and receipts, may also come in handy. Technically, the IRS may challenge your individual tax return up to three years after it is filed- and longer if it suspects tax fraud or intentional underreporting of income. Lenders may also ask for earlier returns when you apply for a loan. As a result, consider keeping your tax returns for a minimum of 10 years.

Retirement Details

There's no requirement to retain your retirement plan statements or the records of contributions you have made to individual retirement accounts, but they are handy records of what you have saved and can expect to receive when you retire. Keep your quarterly summaries until you receive annual statements, then toss the quarterly statements if the annual summaries are correct. Remember, when you make a nondeductible contribution to an IRA account, your records document that you paid taxes at the time of the contribution, so you don't have to pay them later when you withdraw the money. You must report your nondeductible contribution to a traditional IRA on Form 8606 filed with your tax return. Keep a copy of each Form 8606 to keep track of your total basis.

Receipts

Throw out ATM and credit card receipts as soon as you receive your account statement showing the transaction. Keep receipts, credit card statements, or images of cancelled checks for any big-ticket items- such as jewelry, electronics, appliances, or cars. You may need these to file an insurance claim in the event of theft, damage, or loss. Also hold on to receipts for any home improvements. If you are subject to capital gains tax when you sell your home, you may be able to lessen that tax bite by documenting improvements.

This only touches the surface on records retention. You should also permanently retain alimony, custody, or prenuptial agreements; lists of financial assets held; medical, military, birth, death, marriage, divorce, and religious ceremony records; trust agreements; W-2 forms; and your current will, power of attorney, and living will. Many other documents should be kept as well. Consult your CPA for guidance.

Protect Your Privacy

When you decide to dispose of financial records, ensure that you're not revealing personal information. Identity thieves have been known to search through trash bags for Social Security numbers or bank account numbers that they can use in their scams. A low-cost shredder can mitigate this risk. If you don't want to make that investment, tear up your documents carefully before you throw them out, taking particular care to destroy any sections containing sensitive account information or other identification. Store all documents that contain sensitive information in a safe deposit box or fireproof home safe.



God's Echo

If you cannot forgive, at least say you're sorry.

Our children, precious gems are never replaceable - God's gifts.

The brilliance of the 'Sun' for us is Divine Grace, received daily.

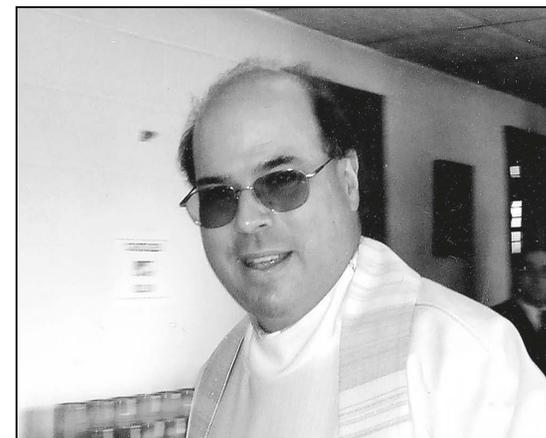
Francis X. Markley, OPL

Mass of Welcome and Remembrance at St. Florian Church

In October 2008, Bishop Lawrence E. Brandt announced the closing of 14 parishes in the Diocese of Greensburg and named a successor parish where people could attend. To help in this transition, Bishop Brandt celebrated Masses of Welcome and Remembrance at the successor parishes.

On Sunday, November 23, Bishop Brandt celebrated a Mass of Welcome and Remembrance at St. Florian Church in United, Pennsylvania. St. Stanislav Parish in Calumet and Forty Martyrs Parish in Trauger were joined with St. Florian's. Concelebrating with Bishop Brandt were Rev. William C. McGuirk, pastor of St. Florian and Rev. Larry J. Kulick, Chaplain of the George Onda District and Director of the Office of Clergy Vocations.

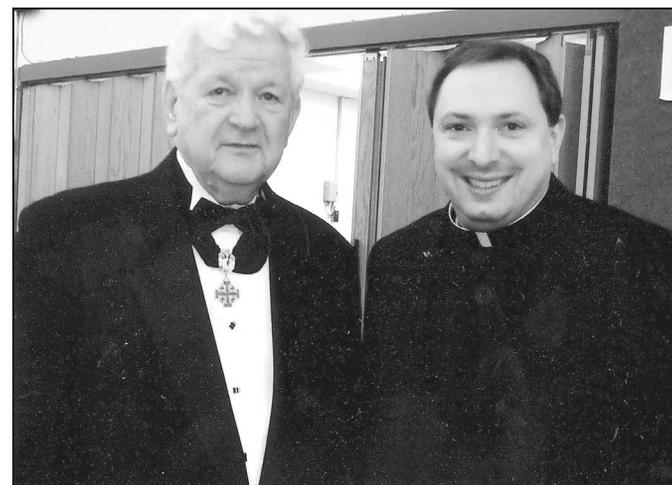
St. Florian Parish is well known in Jednota circles. It is the home parish of our President Emeritus Thomas Hricik and many FCSU members. Present at the celebration were President Emeritus Thomas Hricik, his wife Geraldine, and many other FCSU members.



Reverend William C. McGuirk, Pastor of the new St. Florian parish



Bishop Lawrence Brandt with Thomas and Geraldine Hricik and grandson Drew Silva.



President Emeritus Thomas Hricik and Reverend Larry Kulick, Chaplain of the George Onda District and Director of the Office of Clergy Vocations.



Thomas Hricik and Geraldine Hricik, Knight and Lady of the Holy Sepulchre.

REMEMBER OUR DEPARTED MEMBERS AND FRIENDS

William J. Kuderna Branch 41 Yonkers, New York



William J. Kuderna, 79, auditor of Branch 41 for many years, died Tuesday, November 18, 2008.

Mr. Kuderna was born July 21, 1929 in Forest City, Pennsylvania, a son of Vendel and Julia (Bednar) Kuderna. He attended local schools and graduated from Saunders High School in Yonkers. On June 21, 1956, he married Agnes B. Bearsto in St. Denis Church, Yonkers. She survives and lives in Yonkers.

Mr. Kuderna proudly served his country in the U.S. Army in Korea. He was a mailman for the US Postal Service in Bronxville for 25 years. He then worked in the security department at Sarah Lawrence College for 18 years. He was a member of the Knights of Columbus and was a Past Grand Knight. He was a member of Most Holy Trinity Catholic Church in Yonkers. He was a member of Jednota Branch 41, Catholic Sokols Association and the Holy Name Society.

In addition to his wife, he is survived by his children, Dan (Carol) of Ocean Township, New Jersey and Jean Drury of Kent Lake, New York; grandchildren, Jeff, Brian, Kevin, and Elizabeth; sisters, Margaret Figura and Kathleen DeMeo, both of Yonkers; and his brothers, Leonard of Nyack, New York and Robert of Yonkers. He was predeceased by a sister, Leona Solazzo.

A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated in Most Holy Trinity Church. Entombment was in Ferncliff Cemetery, Hartsdale, New York.

Albert Figura

Thomas R. Appleby Branch 199 Hostetter, Pennsylvania

Thomas R. Appleby, 74, of Mammoth, Pennsylvania, died Saturday, November 29, 2008, at his home. He was the husband

of 53 years to Margaret M. "Marge" Dlugos Appleby.

Born July 30, 1934, in Greensburg, Pennsylvania, he was the son of the late John and Elizabeth Taylor Appleby.

Mr. Appleby was a member of St. Florian Catholic Church, United. Prior to retirement, he was employed as a machinist by Robertshaw, Youngwood. He loved to spend all his time with his wife, no matter if it was working around the house, going out to eat or spending their time just being with each other. Some of his favorite pastimes were watching his grandchildren play sports and watching the Steelers. He was also an avid fisherman.

In addition to his wife, he is survived by his children, Renee Appleby, Tom Appleby and his wife, Mary Beth, and Tim Appleby and his wife, Dot; and grandchildren, Breanna, Alexandra, Bradley, Matthew, Carolyn and Ryan Appleby.

Friends were received at the Jay A. Hoffer Funeral Home, Norvelt. A blessing service was held in the funeral home, followed by a Mass of Christian Burial in St. Florian Catholic Church with the Rev. William C. McGuirk as celebrant. Interment was in St. Florian Cemetery, Trauger.

Sophie Pipak

Joseph F. Buran Branch 769 Endicott, New York



Joseph F. Buran, 90, of Endicott, New York, died Wednesday, November 19, 2008, at his home. He was born December 15, 1917, in Endicott, a son of the late Joe and Pauline Buran. He was married to Helen Stulir Buran and they celebrated many wonderful years together.

Mr. Buran supported the family business, Buran's restaurant until he joined the Army in 1942. During World War II, he served in the South Pacific in New Guinea, Japan and the Philippines. He received the commenda-

tion of the Bronze Star with oak leaf cluster and the Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal. Upon his return from the war, he continued to work in the family business.

Joe was a charter member of St. Joseph Catholic Church, Endicott, American Legion Post #1390, Maine, New York, Czechoslovak Moravian Club, charter supporter of the National World War Memorial and a founding member of the Owego Camera Club. He was known as a jack of all trades and could fix anything including building the home he lived in. Joe enjoyed reading, photography, filming, and being a historian. His life's work included taking photos and videotaping the daily happenings of the Triple Cities area from as early as the 1930s. The most famous photograph was one he took of Masti Huba at Buran's Restaurant which won camera club awards and was copied by many. His film was included in the PBS documentary "The flood of 1935".

Survivors include his wife of 47 years, Helen Stulir Buran; a son Joseph M. Buran and his wife, Lolli of Gaithersburg, Maryland; daughters, Marilyn Murphy and her husband, Joseph of Orange, Texas, Helen Zimmer and her husband James of Maine, New York, and Judy Horak of Endicott; grandchildren, Michael and Christy Murphy, Matthew Murphy of Orange, Texas, Adam and Mason Buran of Gaithersburg, Karen and Todd Harris of Maine, and Alissa and John Vanluvender of Endicott; great-grandchildren, Blake, Emily and Ryan Murphy of Orange, Jacob and Lynsey Harris of Maine; a great-great-grandchild, Hannah Murphy of Orange; sisters, Amelia Buran and Mary Valla; a brother, Milt Buran; and many nieces, nephews and friends. In addition to his parents, he was predeceased by two brothers, Michael and Frank "Bunzo" Buran and grandson, Jamie Zimmer.

Friends were received at the Leon Puce-do Funeral Home, Endicott. A Funeral Mass was offered in St. Joseph Church followed

by burial in the Maine Cemetery, Maine, New York

Henry J. Pochily

Frank Matuszky Branch 199 Hostetter, Pennsylvania

Frank Matuszky, 76, of Latrobe, Pennsylvania, died Friday, December 12, 2008, in Veterans Hospital, Oakland.

Mr. Matuszky was born December 31, 1931, in Unity Township, a son of the late John Kasimir and Mary (Stranko) Matuszky. Frank was a member of Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Ukrainian Catholic Church. He was a Korean War veteran, having served in the Marine Corps, and was retired from Eidenmiller Construction Co., Greensburg.

In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by four brothers, Joseph, Wallace, John and Stephen Matuszky; and two sisters, Pauline Nemcheck and Ann Hanchak.

Frank is survived by two brothers, Anthony Matuszky of Baggaley, and Robert "Mike" Matuszky and his wife, Sharon, of Baggaley; and two sisters, Mary Nemcheck of Baggaley, and Rose Kosiba and her husband, Donald, of Latrobe. He is also survived by a number of nieces and nephews.

Friends were received at the John J. Lopatich Funeral Home, Latrobe. A Paras-tas service was held in the funeral home on Monday, December 15. The Panachida service was held Tuesday, December 16 in the funeral home followed by a funeral Liturgy in Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Church with the Rev. Xavier Elambassery as celebrant. Interment was in St. Mary's Cemetery, Unity Township. American Legion Post 515 and VFW Post 3414 held military services in the funeral home.

Sophie Pipak

Highlights of John Mago's 2008 Tour

John Mago of Vandergrift, Pennsylvania led his annual tour of Slovakia and surrounding countries September 10-27, 2008. By all indications, the tour was a huge success.

A highlight of this year's tour was a meeting with the United States Ambassador to Slovakia Vincent Obsitnik at the U.S. Embassy in Bratislava. The Ambassador met with the group and gave a brief talk on some of his duties and accomplishments. The Ambassador spent time answering questions from members of the tour. After a farewell the group continued on its tour.

The tour made stops in Modra, Nitra and Piastany. While in Piastany, the group enjoyed an evening at Krakovany Village with a dinner and folklore wedding and performance by the ensemble Lusk Krakovany. Members of the group took part in the dancing. A good time was had by all.

Leaving Piastany, the tourists continued on to Cicmany and then to Rajecka Lesna to see the famous wood carving known as the Slovak Bethlehem. From there the tourists went to Banska, Stiavnica, Banska Bystrica, Levoca, Poprad, Spisska Sobota, Presov and Kosice. A special visit was made to the Rusyn village of Tichy Potok located 50 kilometers north of Presov, to see a folklore performance. While there, they met the mayor of Lubica, the youngest mayor in all of Slovakia. A good time was had by all and the food was out of this world.

The tour also made a side trip to Vienna where they saw the Schonbrunn Palace, St. Stephen Cathedral and other sites. There was day visit to Budapest to see St. Matthew Cathedral, the Citadel, Fishermen's Bastion and the Budapest Parliament. The tourists spent two days in Krakow, Poland with visits to Auschwitz, the Wieliczka Salt Mine, the Old Town Market, Royal Castle of Wawel, and Wadawice, birthplace of Pope John Paul II. The tourists were able to attend Mass at the Divine Mercy Shrine. In Prague, the group saw St. Vitus Cathedral, Charles Bridge, Old Town Square and Vladislav Hall.

All the participants enjoyed 2 meals a day plus refreshments. Our English speaking guide

Viera Marecova and bus driver Miro were very helpful and enjoyed by everyone. Miro has been driving for 25 years and is very familiar with Slovakia, Hungary and Poland. He is also a very safe driver.

Plans are already being made for the next tour in September 2009. For more information call John Mago at 724/567-7341, or write: John's Tours, P.O. Box 154, Vandergrift, PA 15690.



Members of the 2008 Tour with Ambassador Vincent Obsitnik at the U.S. Embassy in Bratislava.

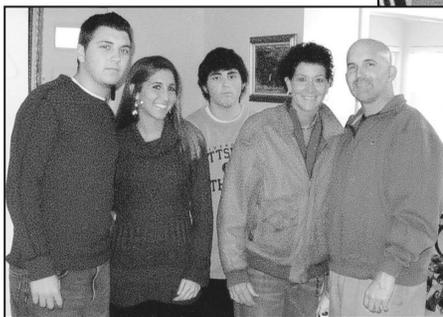
Renfrew Branch 213 Holds Successful Semiannual Meeting

The St. Michael Society, Branch 213, held a very productive and successful Semiannual Meeting on Sunday, December 14, 2008, at the home of the secretary, Joe Belechak in Renfrew, Pennsylvania. Officers were elected and important discussions were held. The meeting was well attended and included many younger members.



The officers elected L-R are: Anita Nixon, Vice President; Joe Belechak, Secretary; Diane Shaffo, President; Mary Belechak, Treasurer; and Rhea Tutich, Sergeant at Arms.

Some of the younger members of Branch 213.



The family of President Diane Shaffo. L-R are Joey Shaffo, Maria Shaffo, Anthony Shaffo, and Diane Shaffo. All are members of Branch 213. Joey and Maria were recipients of FCSU Scholarships.

5.00%

FLEXIBLE PREMIUM DEFERRED ANNUITY FLEXIBLE PREMIUM DEFERRED ANNUITY/IRA

Flexible Premium Deferred Annuity – Currently Earning 5.00% (4.879 APR)

Under the Flexible Premium Deferred Annuity, you may make periodic payments into an annuity fund that accumulates interest at, or greater than, the guaranteed rate. You can open the account with as little as \$500.00 and make additional deposits (\$25.00 minimum) 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:

- The FCSU guarantees your deposits will accumulate interest at no less than 3.0%.
- Your annuity continues to accumulate interest after you have stopped contributing and have begun to receive retirement income. The interest rate you receive on your annuity after settlement will never be less than 3.0%.
- Death Benefit-If you die prior to settlement, your beneficiary receives the full cash value of the annuity. If you die while receiving retirement benefits, the value of your remaining guaranteed benefits will be paid to your beneficiary.
- 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.
- Even though you may not incur an FCSU Early Withdrawal Charge, withdrawals before age 59 ½ may be subject to a federal tax penalty.
- Tax on the interest earned is deferred until the annuity funds are drawn.
- Also available in a Traditional IRA or Roth IRA (subject to IRA Guidelines)

Brief Overview of Medicaid Eligibility

by Joseph Senko

Nursing home rates continue to rise. A recent survey indicated the national average exceeded \$200 per day. This adds up to over \$75,000 per year. Since most senior citizens cannot afford to pay these costs when they are about to enter a nursing home, they are expecting Medicaid to come to the rescue. However, Medicaid, a federal-state welfare program, only become available after seniors exhaust the majority of their assets.

First of all, qualifying seniors are allowed to keep their household goods, a car, term life insurance up to \$1,500 in a mortuary trust and burial plot and up to \$2,000 in cash. They can also own a home, but the amount of equity is limited. If the senior requesting Medicaid coverage is married, in addition to meeting the above limitations, the spouse must meet additional requirements. For example, the spouse's assets cannot exceed \$104,400 (2008) and have no more than \$2,610 in income per month.

The rules for qualifying for Medicaid assistance are very complicated. The planning and paperwork necessary are time consuming. Also, the rules may vary slightly from state to state. Therefore, in order to qualify for Medicaid help, a lot of planning and monitoring is necessary. The necessity for planning can best be explained through examples.

Cash Build Up

Some expenses are normally paid annually such as insurance premiums and real estate taxes. Seniors have a tendency to put aside each month some of their social security or pension proceeds to cover these expenses. Doing this can create a cash build up in excess of the \$2,000 permitted by Medicaid recipients. As an alternative, arrangements can be made to have these expenses paid monthly.

Deficit Reduction Act

Too often, seniors, in order to qualify for Medicaid, would transfer their excess assets to their children immediately prior to entering a nursing home. Because of this abuse, Congress passed the Deficit Reduction Act of 2005. Under the act, the donor is penalized for giving away assets and must wait until Medicaid coverage can begin. One of the provisions of the law is a look-back period of 60 months. The look-back period refers to the time frame during which Medicaid can check a person's records to see if he or she has given away any assets.

For example, if a senior enters a nursing home prior to 60 months of transferring assets, a waiting period for eligibility will be enforced. The waiting or penalty period is calculated by dividing the amount transferred by the average cost of nursing home fees in the area. This waiting period begins when the senior enters the nursing home.

Reverse Half-A-Loaf Method

If the transfer is made upon entering the nursing home, and the recipient pays the monthly nursing home bills from the transfer, the waiting period would be reduced. For example, if the average nursing home cost is \$6,000 per month, and the senior transferred \$240,000 to a family member, the normal waiting period would be 40 months (\$240,000 : 6,000). For each monthly payment that the family member makes, the waiting period is reduced by one month. This example shows the senior would become eligible for Medicaid after only 20 months. Thus, the families will not have to spend the remaining \$120,000. As a caution, this plan is not acceptable in every state.

Services Rendered

Seniors may pay their caregivers (even those related) a reasonable fee for services. These fees help reduce the assets of a future Medicaid recipient.

Other Options

Some states consider the purchase of annuities payable over life expectancy as a reduction in available assets. In certain states, transfers to a 529 plan are considered exempt assets for Medicaid purposes. Since these options are not accepted in every state, it is recommend contacting a local elder law attorney before such actions are taken.

FROM THE DESK OF THE NATIONAL SECRETARY

FIRST CATHOLIC SLOVAK UNION ANNUITY & IRA INTEREST RATES

EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2009 THRU MARCH 31, 2009

The annual yield on existing Flexible Premium Deferred Annuities & IRA's is 5.00% (4.879% APR)

The annual yield on a new "Park 2 Annuity" is 4.25% (4.162% APR)

The annual yield on accounts with the "Cash Interest" Option is 4.75% (4.641 APR)

The annual yield for new Settlement Options is based on 4.50% (4.402% APR)

If you have any questions about our annuities or IRA's,
please contact your local branch officer or the Home Office!

1-800-533-6682

Kenneth A. Arendt, National Secretary

**If each member would sign up just one new member,
we could double our Society immediately**

THINK ABOUT IT!

MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 2008

HOME OFFICE • INDEPENDENCE, OHIO

OPEN

President Andrew M. Rajec called the meeting to order at 9:00 A.M. and asked Vice President Andrew R. Harcar, Sr., to lead the prayer.

ROLL CALL

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

ACCEPTANCE OF THE OCTOBER MEETING MINUTES

The Executive Secretary presented the minutes of the October, 2008 Executive Committee meeting. A motion was made by Andrew Harcar and seconded by Kenneth Arendt to accept the minutes. Motion carried.

TREASURER'S STOCK AND BOND REPORT

The President led a discussion reviewing the monthly reports from our custodian, Merrill Lynch. There was also a discussion regarding our excess cash funds. The Executive Secretary reviewed our annuity contributions for 2008 and redemptions for 2008. There was no written Treasurer's report for this month.

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

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

MONTHLY DISBURSEMENTS

The Executive Secretary reported that the following disbursements were incurred and paid during the month of October:

Disbursements for the month of October 2008

Death Benefits & Accumulations	\$150,575.90
Cash Withdrawals & Accumulations	\$ 55,412.57
Matured Endowments & Accumulations	\$ - 0 -
Trust Fund	\$ 1,617.01

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.

The Executive Secretary updated the Executive Committee about new procedures on accepting credit card payments and on the scanning procedures for daily bank deposits. The Executive Secretary stated that everything is working out well.

FEDERAL HOME LOAN BANK

The Executive Secretary stated that the Home Office received a notice from the Federal Home Loan Bank of Cincinnati that we were accepted for membership. He further stated that we are in process of sending funds to the FHLB to complete our membership requirements.

SALES AND MARKETING

The Vice President reviewed our Sales Production Report in different Regions and answered the Executive Committee's questions.

Seminars

The Vice President updated the Executive Committee on his progress of planning seminars for 2009. He stated that he will be contacting District officers who are interested in hosting seminars in 2009 and will set up the dates.

The Vice President updated the Executive Committee on full page ads published in Jednota newspaper and reviewed the ads that are being mailed to Branches and Members from the Home Office.

2010 CONVENTION

The President and the Executive Secretary met Jim Harmon, an event planner, and discussed the site inspection of the proposed convention sites for our 2010 Convention. The President stated that he would like to make the announcement about the Convention date and site at the Annual Board of Directors Meeting in March 2009. The President will update the Board of Directors as more information becomes available.

JEDNOTA ESTATES

The President updated the Executive Committee about the appraisal that is being done on our property in Middletown, PA. He stated that he has been in contact with the Industrial Appraisal Firm and is checking on their progress with the appraisal. Once this is completed, the President will update the Executive Committee and the Board of Directors.

The President also updated the Executive Committee on the roof repairs being done on the Printery building in Middletown. He stated that part of the roof will be totally replaced and some parts will be repaired.

BOND REPOSITORY AGENT

The Executive Secretary presented an update on his discussion with representatives of two local area banks concerning the possibility of both or either becoming custodian(s) of our bonds to replace our present custodian. It was suggested that we make no changes at present time and that we review our options after January 1, 2009.

REQUESTS FOR ADS AND DONATIONS

Requests were reviewed and acted upon.

ADJOURN

There being no further business to discuss, a motion was made by Andrew Harcar and seconded by Kenneth Arendt to adjourn the meeting. The Vice President closed the meeting with prayer.

Andrew M. Rajec
President

Kenneth A. Arendt
Executive Secretary



Slovak Self-Taught

By Slavo Moravek

In the Hotel

Is there a good hotel here	Je tu nejaký dobrý hotel?	(Ye tu nYeYakee doobree hotel)
Yes, you may get a good room there	Áno, môžete tam dostať dobrú izbu	(Áno, mWOZyYe tam dostatY dobroo izbu)

Do you want some supper?	Chcete večeru?	(XtsetYe vecheru)
Here is your bill	Tu je váš účet	(tu Ye vÁsh oochet)
Are you going to bed?	Idete spať?	(idYetYe spatY)
When do you want to get up?	Kedy chcete vstať?	(kedi Xyset Ye vstatY)
At six in the morning	O šiestej ráno	(o shYeste rÁno)
How much do I owe you?	Kolko som vám dlžen?	(kolYko som vÁm dlz Yen)

At Breakfast

Breakfast is served	Raňajky sú hotové	(ranYaYki soo hotovÉ)
Come to Breakfast	Podte raňajkovať	(podYtYe ranYaYkovat Y)
Do you drink tea or coffee?	Pijete čaj alebo kávu?	(piYetYe chaY abo kÁvu)
Here is some bread	Tu je chlieb	(tu Ye XIYYeb)
Will you have an egg?	Chcete vajce?	(Xtset Ye vaYtse)
Hard or soft?	Na tvrdo abo na mäkko?	(na tvrdo abo na mÁkko)
Bring some more	Doneste ešte	(donYestYe echtYe)
Pass the butter	Podajte maslo	(poda Yt Ye maslo)
Give him the salt	Dajte mu soľ	(daYtYe mu solY)
Give her the spoon	Dajte jej lyžicu	(daYtYe YeY lizYtsu)
This knife is dull	Tento nôž je tupý	(tento n WOzY Ye tupee)

At Dinner

Have you ordered dinner?	Objednali ste obed?	(obYednali stYe obed)
Show me the menu	Ukážte mi jedálny lístok	(ukázYtYe mi menu)
Dinner is served	Obed je hotový	(obed Ye hotovee)
What soup will you have?	Akú polievku chcete?	(Akoo polYevku Xtset Ye)
Will you have some soup?	Chcete polievky?	(XtsetYe pol Yevki)
No, thank you	Nie, ďakujem	(NYYe, dYakuYem)
Do you want some potatoes?	Chcete zemiaky?	(Xtset Ye zemYaki)
Give me some bread	Dajte mi chleba	(DaYtYe mi XIYeba)
I want some meat	Chcem mäsa	(Xtsem mÁsa)
Glass of water	Pohár vody	(pohÁr vodi)
Bottle of beer	Fľaška piva	(lYaska piva)
Give me a cup of milk	Dajte mi šálku mlieka	(daYtYe mi shYalku miYYeka)
Are you ready?	Ste hotový	(st Ye hotovee)

News From Slovakia

Impact of Financial Crisis not Serious in Slovakia

The global financial crisis is getting deeper, but the situation in Slovakia is not critical, said general director of the Economy Ministry's strategy section Vojtech Ferencz at a session of the ministry's executives recently.

Most job vacancies are in the Bratislava region- where there haven't been any major layoffs announced Darius Bosnak from the ministry's press department.

Businesses in Trencin region will see 616 layoffs, which is the highest number in Slovakia. Job centers in this region are already registering more than 2,800 vacancies.

"There is approximately 17,500 vacancies in Slovakia, while only 3,500 layoffs have been posted since October. The situation isn't alarming yet," said Ferencz, adding that the number of the unemployed has fallen by almost 10,500 since last year.

Dozens of businesses have announce massive layoffs, for example, the engineering company KINEX Bytca (Zilina region)-198 people, Danfoss Compressors Zlate Moravce (Nitra region)-150 people, and Gabor Banovce nad Bebravou (Trencin region)- 476 people.

Out of 46 job centers in Slovakia, 11 have indicated a total of 558 jobs under threat.

TASR

Slovakia is the Detroit of East for South Korea

Slovakia is the Detroit of the east for South Korea, said Ko Dong-Hwan, head of a delegation of private entrepreneurs from Korea at a conference attended by ten Korean and 12 Slovak automobile companies in Bratislava last month.

At the same time, Ko Dong-Hwan expressed his appreciation for the level of cooperation between Slovakia and Korea in the automobile sector.

"Both participants are trying to find a new partner on foreign markets to carry out their production sales. It is beneficial for Slovak companies to receive imports of affordably-priced components, and in doing so produce better and competitive final products," said Juraj Sumichrast, foreign trade section director of the Slovak Investment and Trade Development Agency (SARIO)

TASR

Slovak National Library Launches Digital Library

The Slovak National Library (SNK) has launched a new electronic system for scanning books and periodicals, SLOVAKIA was told by SNK director Dusan Katuscak recently.

The launching of the digitalization of items stored at SNK is the culmination of the first stage of a project aimed at setting up the so-called Slovak Digital Library, which will be based in a former military medical materials warehouse in Vrutky (Zilina region),

According to Katuscak, there are no more than ten such automatic digitalization systems in the entire European Union. Slovakia is among the first EU members to launch the digitalization project, and SNK plans to buy another three scanning machines worth 7 million crowns each.

The number of items to be processed at SNK is around 500,000, but SNK expects other institutions such as libraries and museums to join the project, which would increase the number of items to be scanned to 3.5 million.

TASR

Fico: Slovak Railways First Victim of Crisis

The first victim of the global economic crisis in Slovakia are the Slovak railways, Prime Minister Robert Fico said after meeting with social partners in Bratislava recently.

Railways are now in a difficult situation due to expected 40-percent loss in profits in the freight rail transportation. "It's caused by the fact that large companies won't make use of railways in the same extent they use them now," Fico said. He also reassured the railroad workers that the Government wouldn't agree to layoffs.

According to Fico, Finance Minister Jan Pociatek has already prepared initial plans aimed at financial assistance to the Slovak railways that will help them to tackle the impacts of the crisis. "It mostly concerns moves focusing on the reduction of the loss the railways suffered in 2007," said Fico, adding that the problem of Slovak railways- that has lasted for many years- cannot be resolved without money.

TASR

Merina Trencin to Lay Off 150 Employees

Textile company Merina Trencin has announced plans to lay off 150 employees as of January 2009, with its whole operation under threat of closure, the company's general director Miroslav Majernik said recently.

Mayernik blames the global economic crisis and strengthening competition from Asia.

Majernik described his company as "The Last of the Mohicans" when it comes to woolen fabrics for ready-to-wear clothing in Central Europe. The layoffs will leave 120-130 employees working at the company, he added.

"The layoffs will concern many people who have been employed in Merina for a long time, with women especially likely to be affected," director of Trencin job center Teresa Pavlas-kova told Slovakia.

Director of the Textile and Clothing Association (ATOP) Dusan Gajdusek confirmed that Slovakia's textile industry has been under pressure from globalization since 2003.

"This is going to be difficult for Merina's employees, who are used to a highly-specialized work," said one of the workers.

TASR

Slovaks Expect Benefits of Euro Adoption when Traveling Abroad

Slovaks view the biggest advantage of the introduction of the euro on January 1, 2009 in that they won't have to exchange Slovak crowns for euros when travelling abroad, said Pavol Marchevsky from the Institute of Public Opinion Research (UVVM) at the Statistics Office recently.

"Businessmen state in public opinion polls that this (the adoption of the euro) will simplify their foreign trading. Slovaks also see an advantage in the fact that the euro is considered a more stable currency," said Marchevsky.

On the other hand, the new appearance of Slovakia's future currency is viewed as a disadvantage. People are also afraid of price hikes, a large number of weighty euro coins in their wallets and possibly getting shortchanged in shops.

TASR

*From the Desk of the Executive Secretary -
Kenneth A. Arendt*

ATTENTION ALL SCHOLARSHIP APPLICANTS

The First Catholic Slovak Union is pleased to announce it is accepting applications for its 2009 Scholarship Program.

Seventy (70) **ONE-TIME SCHOLARSHIPS** in the amount of \$500.00 each will be awarded to the winners. In addition, a **ONE-TIME** "Philip Hrobak Scholarship" and "Stephanie Husek Scholarship" in the amount of \$750.00 each will be awarded to the highest ranking male and female applicants respectively.

Three additional **ONE-TIME SCHOLARSHIPS** of \$500.00 each will be given from the "John A. Sabol Nursing Scholarship Fund" to applicants who have been accepted into either an approved three or four year hospital nursing program or a fully-accredited college of their choice.

In addition, upon proof of college graduation, each recipient will be issued a \$3,000 Single Premium Life Insurance Policy.

The rules and requirements are as follows:

1. Applicants must have a minimum of \$1,000 of reserve insurance with F.C.S.U. for at least four years prior to April 1st of the year of graduation from high school; or an applicant must have \$5,000 or more of term insurance with the F.C.S.U. for at least four years prior to April 1st of the year of graduation from high school. All scholarship winners must maintain this insurance in force during their college years. Applicants must be insured prior to April 1, 2005 to be eligible under the rules of this period.
2. Applicants must apply for grants in the Spring of their senior year of high school.
3. Applicants must have applied for the Fall term at a qualifying institution. Proof of college admission must be sent to the Home Office with application.
4. Applicants must apply on an official form which can be obtained from their branch, F.C.S.U. web site or the Executive Secretary of the F.C.S.U.
5. Applicants will send completed applications to: **Scholarship Program, First Catholic Slovak Union, 6611 Rockside Road, Independence, OH 44131.**
6. Applications will be accepted only on the proper forms signed by the branch financial secretary. **INCOMPLETE APPLICATIONS (THOSE WHICH ARE RECEIVED NOT FULLY COMPLETED OR DO NOT HAVE ALL ATTACHMENTS) WILL BE INVALID AND WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE.**
7. Winners will be chosen by the Scholarship Committee according to their individual merit in categories of high school cumulative grade point averages, extracurricular activities, talents, achievements, initiative, communication skills, transcripts and S.A.T. and/or A.C.T. test scores.
8. Final award checks will be made payable to the student.

The scholarship application is being mailed to all members between the ages of 17 and 19. If you are interested and do not receive the application, please contact your branch officer or the Home Office at 1-800-JEDNOTA. **Applications must be postmarked by Midnight, February 28, 2009.** **All applications without the above stipulated postmark will be considered invalid.**

**If each member would sign up just one new member,
we could double our Society immediately**

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OR THE HOME OFFICE AT 1-800-533-6682**

FIRST CATHOLIC SLOVAK UNION
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6611 Rockside Road
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Josef Ivaska Jr (second from left) sang the lead role of Gastone in the opera La Traviata at the Amato Opera Theatre in Manhattan recently. His performance came just one day after the birth of his first child Ivana Ivaska with his wife Renata Juriasova, also a singer and performer. Jozef is one of two featured singers on a CD produced by Ladislav Bolchazy of Slovak folk songs. Translated into English, it's titled "True Love, God, True Love". Last summer Jozef's sang in Austria and Germany.

SPECIAL REMINDER

There has been a change in our address. The new address for sending all articles is Jednota Estates, 1001 Rosedale Avenue, Middletown, PA 17057. Please do not use the old 1011 Rosedale Avenue address. You may continue to send by fax at 717/944-3107 or by email at editorjednota@yahoo.com. Thank you.

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NEW FROM FCSU

FROM THE DESK OF THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY:

The First Catholic Slovak Union is pleased to announce that it can now accept credit cards for Insurance premium payments.

*Annuity payments cannot be made with credit cards.

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Please contact the home office at 1-800-533-6682 for further information or go to our website at www.fcsu.com to download a payment form.

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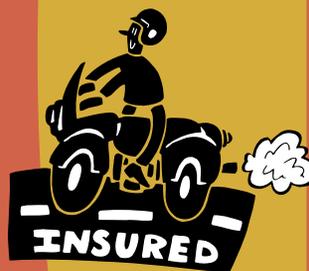
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Quarterly Premium Rates

Principal Sum	Single	Family
\$100,000	\$12	\$18
\$200,000	\$24	\$36
\$300,000	\$36	\$54
\$400,000	\$48	\$72
\$500,000	\$60	\$90

Premiums can be paid with
Credit Cards, Debit Cards, or a Bank Account.

Special Fraternal Benefit

If a member or a new member (ages 30-65) is issued a minimum \$10,000 Whole Life, a 20-Pay Life, or a *Single Premium Policy, issued after August 1, 2008, FCSU will include, as a Fraternal Benefit, a single \$25,000 **AD&D Benefit at no additional charge for as long as a premium is being paid. Contact your local branch officer or the Home Office at 1-800-533-6682 for further details.

*Single Premium Policies are eligible for the first 5 years
**Insurance is underwritten by Federal Insurance Company, a member insurer of the Chubb Group of Insurance Companies. Exclusions may apply. Insurance may not be available in all jurisdictions.

BRANCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

BRANCHES 5, 240, 263, AND 419-OLYPHANT, NANTICOKE, DUPONT, AND WILKES-BARRE, PENNSYLVANIA

Branches 5, 240, 263 and 419 will hold a joint Annual Meeting on Sunday, January 25, 2009, at 1:00 p.m. at the home of Joe Obester, 500 Brown Street, Duryea, Pennsylvania. On the agenda will be the auditor's report, a discussion of securing new members and branch activities, and the election of officers. All members are encouraged to attend. A buffet will follow the meeting.

Joe Obester, Financial Secretary

BRANCH 10-OLYPHANT, PENNSYLVANIA

The St. John the Baptist Society, Branch 10, held its Annual Meeting, Audit and Election of Officers on Sunday, November 30, 2008, at the home of Recording Secretary William A. Nalevanko, 405 North River Street, Olyphant, Pennsylvania.

The following officers were elected for 2009: Daniel Spegar, President; Gaza Mika, Vice President; William Spegar, Secretary-Treasurer; William A. Nalevanko, Recording Secretary; and Michael Antonik and Florence M. Nalevanko, Auditors.

Donations in the amount of \$8,500 were approved for distribution in 2009 to the following: Michael Bosak Society in Slovakia; LaSalle Academy, Jessup, PA; Holy Ghost Church, Olyphant, PA; Lackawanna County Health Care Center, Olyphant; Sisters of SS. Cyril and Methodius Retirement Fund; Sisters of SS. Cyril and Methodius Holiday

Fund, Jankola Library, Danville, PA; Valley Community Library, Peckville, PA; and St. Francis of Assisi Kitchen, Scranton, PA.

Arrangements are being made for the annual Communion Breakfast on Sunday, June 28, 2009 following the 8:00 a.m. Mass at Holy Ghost Church, Olyphant. This Mass will be offered for all living and deceased members of the Branch.

Finally, the officers of Branch 10 wish to extend best wishes to everyone for a Joyful New Year.

William A. Nalevanko, Recording Secretary

BRANCH 24-CLEVELAND, OHIO

The St. Andrew Svorad Society, Branch 24, will hold its Annual Meeting on Sunday, January 25, 2009, at 2:00 p.m. at the Karlin Club, 5308 Fleet Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio. On the agenda will be a financial report, a discussion of branch activities, and the election of officers.

Bob Kopco, President

BRANCH 35-BRADDOCK, PENNSYLVANIA

The St. Michael Slovak Society, Branch 35, will hold its Annual Meeting on Saturday, January 10, 2009, at 1:00 p.m. at the residence of Joseph Yuros, 15 Sumner Avenue, Forest Hills, Pennsylvania. Fraternal activities for the year 2009 as well as other lodge business will be discussed. All members are invited to attend.

Joseph Yuros, Financial Secretary

BRANCH 45-NEW YORK CITY

The St. Matthew the Evangelist Society, Branch 45, will hold a meeting on Sunday, January 11, 2009, at 12:30 p.m. after the Slovak Mass at St. John Nepomucene Church, 66th Street and First Avenue, New York City. We urge all members to attend this meeting.

Maria Jurasi, Financial Secretary

BRANCH 89-MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN

The Knights of St. Mary & St. Joseph Society, Branch 89, will hold a meeting and election of officers on Sunday, January 25, 2009, at 12:30 p.m. at The Grecian Inn, 14375 West Capital Drive, Brookfield, Wisconsin. There will be social time from 12:30 to 1:00 p.m. followed by the meeting with lunch at 2:30 p.m. Lunch for members is complimentary; guests will be charged \$15.00. Reservations must be made by January 20, 2009. To make reservations call Mike Novak at 414/445-5382, or send your check made payable to Knights of St. Mary & Joseph Br. 89 to Mike Novak, 3237 N. 93rd St., Milwaukee, WI 53222.

On the agenda will be the election officers, and a discussion of donations and activities for 2009.

Our Easter Duty Mass will be held on Sunday, March 29, 2009, at 9:00 p.m. in St. Margaret Mary Church, 3970 North 92nd Street, Milwaukee. Breakfast will be served immediately after the liturgy at 10:30 a.m. at The Grecian Inn. Breakfast is complimentary for members; guests will be charged \$12.00. Children under age 6 are free. Reservations must be made by March 22, 2009. Call Mike with the number attending at 414/445-5382, or send a check payable to Knights of St. Mary & Joseph Br. 89 to Mike Novak, 3237 N. 93rd St., Milwaukee, WI 53222.

Mike Novak, President

BRANCH 240P-TAYLOR, PENNSYLVANIA

The St. John the Baptist Society, Branch 240P, will hold its next meeting on Sunday, January 11, 2009, at 2:00 p.m. at the home of Stephen J. Kavulich, 41 Hedge Row Run, Clarks Summit, Pennsylvania.

Mark Kavulich, Secretary

BRANCH 312-BAGGALEY, PENNSYLVANIA

The St. Nicholas Society, Branch 312, will hold its Annual Meeting on Sunday, January 11, 2009, at 2:00 p.m. at the home of Mark Smolleck, 1121 Monastery Drive, Latrobe, Pennsylvania.

The officers of Branch 312 wish all of our fellow Jednota members a very Happy and Healthy New Year.

Micki Smolleck, Secretary

BRANCH 313-CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

The St. John the Baptist Society, Branch 313, will hold a meeting on Saturday, January 10, 2009, at 11:00 a.m. at Mother of Sorrows Convent, 5900 West 147th Street, Oak Forest, Illinois. On the agenda will be officers' reports and a discussion of new membership for the FCSI which has good products to offer our members. We will also have reports from the auditors and the treasurer. After the meeting, the election of officers will take place.

Best wishes and congratulations to Jamie Clark and Laurin Tocik for winning FCSU

Jednota 2008 Scholarships.

Joseph M. Bugel,

President & Financial Secretary

BRANCH 313-CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

The St. John the Baptist Society, Branch 313, is trying to locate the following members: Vincent Cerniuk, Theresa Hatfield, Amy Horwath, Stephen Izacovics, Colleen Komar, Eugene Korienek, Marguerite Korienek, Stephen Kosteb, Charles Kozak, Kenneth Michalik, Barbara Perkins, Kimberly Rozema, Thaddeus Rozema, Josephine Ruzon, Angela Schandor, and Lorna Talabay. If anyone knows the address or phone number for any of these members please call Joseph Bugel at 708/349-7873.

Joseph M. Bugel, President

BRANCH 332P-DETROIT, MICHIGAN

There has been a merger between the St. Andrew Society, Branch 332P in Detroit, Michigan with the St. Joseph Society, Branch 743, Detroit. All members of Branch 332P will now hold membership in Branch 743. This merger has taken place as of December 3, 2008. If you should need any service on your policy, or new or additional insurance, please contact Joseph C. Rimarcik, 42909 Sussex Park Dr., Sterling Heights, MI 48314. Phone: 586/254-0225.

We wish to thank all the past officers for their dedication and efforts through the years performed in the spirit of fraternalism.

Kenneth A. Arendt, National Secretary

BRANCH 600-LEECHBURG, PENNSYLVANIA

The St. Mary Society, Branch 600, held its Annual Meeting for the Election of Officers on Sunday, December 28, 2008, at 1:00 p.m. at John's Tours Office, Route 66 in the Village of Riverview.

John Mago, President

BRANCH 628-HOMESTEAD, PENNSYLVANIA

The St. Michael the Archangel Society, Branch 628, held a meeting on Tuesday, December 30, 2008, at 7:00 p.m. at 821 Laura Avenue, West Mifflin, Pennsylvania. On the agenda was a recap of Branch activities during the year and the election of officers for 2009.

Sylvia J. Vehec, Recording Secretary

BRANCH 784-MONTREAL, QUEBEC

The SS. Cyril and Methodius Society, Branch 784, will hold a joint Annual Meeting with Branch 810 and the Prince Rastislav District on Sunday, January 18, 2008, following the last Mass at SS. Cyril and Methodius Parish Hall, Montreal, Quebec. On the agenda will be a discussion of activities for 2009 and the election of officers.

Alice Dobrik, Financial Secretary

BRANCH 820-MONTREAL, QUEBEC

The St. Martin Society, Branch 810, will hold a joint Annual Meeting with Branch 784 and the Prince Rastislav District on Sunday, January 18, 2008, following the last Mass at SS. Cyril and Methodius Parish Hall, Montreal Quebec. On the agenda will be the election of officers and a discussion of activities for 2009.

Alice Dobrik, Financial Secretary

DISTRICT ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRINCE RASTISLAV DISTRICT-MONTREAL, QUEBEC

The Prince Rastislav District will hold an Annual Meeting with Branches 784 and 810 on Sunday, January 18, 2008, following the last Mass at SS. Cyril and Methodius Parish Hall, Montreal, Quebec. On the agenda will be the election of officers and a discussion of activities for 2009.

Alice Dobrik, Financial Secretary

REV. JOSEPH L. KOSTIK DISTRICT-YOUNGSTOWN, OHIO

The Rev. Joseph L. Kostik District is sponsoring a bus trip to the Meadows Casino on Saturday, January 31, 2009. The bus will depart at 9:00 a.m. from Fab Limousine, located on New Road in Austintown, Ohio. The cost is \$30.00 (\$15.00 rebate) per person. For more information and reservations, call Carla Peshek at 330/799-3927, Nancy Scavina at 330/758-4536, or Paul Ritz at 330/744-2377.

Carla Peshek, President

From the Desk of the Executive Secretary

Congratulations to the 2008 Jednota Benevolent Foundation Scholarship Winners:

Cambria Alpha	Grand Junction, Colorado
Anita Anderko	North Royalton, Ohio
Ryan T. Dutton	Boardman, Ohio
Mollie Ferlin	Latrobe, Pennsylvania
Nicholas Galasso	Homer City, Pennsylvania
Martin Madar	Miami, Florida
Mary Ellen Pecharka	Meadow Lands, Pennsylvania
Genevieve Ann Pecharka	Meadow Lands, Pennsylvania
Caitlin Schwartz	Hamilton, New Jersey
Elise Schwer	Bedminster, New Jersey

FROM THE SLOVAK KITCHEN

Poppysseed Cake

½ pound butter melted
1 ¼ cups sugar
4 eggs, separated
1 cup poppyseed moist or (dry ¼ cup)
½ pint sour cream
½ cup milk (lukewarm)
1 teaspoon baking soda
2 cups flour
1 teaspoon vanilla

Mix ingredients. Beat egg whites and fold into batter. Bake in ungreased tube pan-50 minutes-oven 350 degrees

Cheese Cake

¾ pound shortening
1 ½ pounds flour
1 ½ cups sugar
1 egg and 1 yolk
1 teaspoon soda
1 lemon rind and juice
1 cup milk (about)

Mix like pie crust. Divide dough in half. Roll or pat for bottom crust and place dough in greased pan, then pour in cheese mixture and add top crust, and bake at 350 degrees until golden brown.

Cheese Dough with Sour Cream

4 cups flour
1 pound cottage cheese
¼ pound butter or margarine
1 pint sour cream

Mix flour with cottage cheese, then knead a little. Shape dough with your hands until it looks like a small nut roll. Slice about an inch thick.

Boil about 2 quarts of water, drop slices of dough in and boil them until they come to the top. Scoop dough out with ladle carefully. Then melt butter or margarine and add sour cream. Heat thoroughly. Add cheese dough and serve while hot. Delicious with fried fish.

Slovak Coffee Cake

3 cups sifted all purpose flour
1 cup sugar
1 cup firmly packed brown sugar
½ teaspoon salt
½ cup butter
1 cup chopped dates
1 cup chopped nuts
1 cup sour milk
1 teaspoon baking soda
Mix and sift flour, sugar, brown sugar and salt; cut in the butter and reserve a ½ cup for topping.

To the remaining mixture add dates and nuts and mix well. Stir in the sour milk to which baking soda has been added. Spread batter evenly in buttered pan 8 ½ x 10", and scatter the reserved mixture on the top. Bake in moderate oven (350 degrees) 40 to 45 minutes.

From the Desk of the Executive Secretary:

Attention:

All Jednota Members Residing in Illinois

The Illinois Fraternal Congress is accepting applications for its 2009 scholarship program.

If you meet the requirements listed below and wish to apply for a scholarship, please call the Home Office for an application. Our toll-free number is 1-800-533-6682 (1-800-JED-NOTA)

Illinois Fraternal Congress Scholarship Program Applicant Information Sheet

1. Applicant must be currently attending or planning to enroll as a full time student in an accredited college, trade or technical school. The applicant may also be returning to school.

2. The applicant, the applicant's parent or legal guardian must be a member in good standing of an Illinois fraternal benefit society for a minimum of two years.

3. The applicant, the applicant's parent or legal guardian must belong to a Society whose membership dues are current with the Illinois Fraternal Congress.

4. An applicant who has lived apart from his/her family for a period of one year may be considered a separate family and establish eligibility through his/her own membership in an Illinois lodge.

5. Three (3) non-renewable scholarships will be awarded in the amount of \$500 and will be awarded at the discretion of the IFC Board.

6. Recipients are not eligible for a second scholarship from the IFC.

7. The Society coordinator must return the application to the IFC Scholarship Chair by February 1, 2009. All applicants will go through a judging process and the winners will be announced at the annual Illinois Fraternal Congress meeting in March 2009.

8. The decisions of the judges will be final.

9. Payment of the scholarship will be made directly to the recipient upon notice from the institution to which the winning recipient has been accepted.

10. A current grade transcript must accompany the scholarship application. Because of the February 1, 2009 deadline, students should secure a current high school or college transcript of grades BEFORE going on Christmas break. Many administrative offices are usually closed during the holidays.

11. All questions on the application must be answered. Incomplete applications will be disqualified.

IFC Scholarship Chairman

Tom Adamson, National Catholic Society of Foresters



Slovakia's Two (sic) Flags

Stanislav J. Kirschbaum, FRSC

My article on the Slovak flag hanging on a major thoroughfare in Philadelphia brought forth an answer from Barbara Wentling, President of the Czech/Slovak Heritage Association in Philadelphia, who pointed out that, contrary to what I wrote, it is not an "incorrect" flag that is hanging on the Benjamin Franklin Parkway. I am grateful to her for having taken the trouble to enquire at the Slovak Embassy in Washington about this matter, and, as result, to bring to my attention not only the fact that a correct flag is flying, but that there are two words for flag in the Slovak language: *vlajka* and *zástava*. Each refers to a different presentation of the colours and the Slovak coat of arms.

A flag that is flying on a flag pole, shall we say in front of an embassy, is called a *vlajka* – and there the presentation of the colours and the coat of arms is horizontal. This is the flag that one sees flying at United Nations Headquarters in New York, at NATO Headquarters in Brussels, and generally in front of all major international institutions and Slovak embassies abroad. However, the flag that is flying on Benjamin Franklin Parkway is a *zástava*, which is to say a flag whose colours and coat of arms are in a vertical presentation. In Bratislava, such a *zástava* hangs in front of the Presidential Palace. Slovakia is among the countries in the world that have these two flag presentations and to make sure that no one confuses them in Slovakia, two words are used. In English, a *zástava* could be a flag that is more appropriately named a "banner." But let us call it a flag here.

The question now is whether the *proper* Slovak flag is flying on the Benjamin Franklin Parkway? Although I did not look at every flag along that magnificent boulevard, Slovakia's flag was the only vertical one I noticed, in other words the only "banner" that caught my attention (in addition to the spelling – more below). All other countries had a *vlajka* in position, in other words, a flag that, in each case, was hanging vertically rather than horizontally. Should Slovakia's be different? Should not a Slovak *vlajka* be flying? It is not up to me to give an answer, but I suspect, if the question were put to the heraldic office in Slovakia, the answer might indicate that *vlajka* rather than a *zástava* is the appropriate flag in this case.

As for the incorrect spelling, Mrs Wentling writes that City Hall in Philadelphia was contacted and that the spelling will be corrected. So what is the outcome of all of this? First, we learned that Slovakia has two (*sic*) flags, or, if one prefers, two variations of its flag. Secondly, until I noticed that a *zástava* rather than a *vlajka* was flying and the name was spelt incorrectly, it could be said that Slovakia stood out! The question is: how many people did and how many more would notice that? Upon reflection, perhaps, in this case at any rate, it is better to be like the rest of the world.

YOUTH ROUND-UP

The St. Clement Society, Branch 40, recently announced its Elementary Scholarship recipient. This year's winner was Maddi Linn Cave. She is a student at St. Patrick's School in Washington, Illinois. Maddi Linn is the daughter of Joe and Misti Cave of East Peoria, Illinois. Congratulations Maddi Linn and best wishes for a wonderful school year.

Branch 153 in Chicago, Illinois, welcomes its newest member, Peter John Jurcenko. Peter's grandparents, parents, aunts, uncles, cousins and other family members are all members of Branch 153. Great-grandparents and great-great-grandparents are also members of the branch. Welcome Peter!

Branch 153 in Chicago is very proud of its member Lindsay Doise. Lindsay is a freshman at South Suburban College in South Holland, Illinois studying to become a registered nurse. Lindsay received a FCSU Scholarship to assist her in her studies. She was also awarded a \$100 college grant from the District 2 Stefan Moyses Scholarship Fund. FCSU National President Andrew Rajec and District 2 President John Jurcenko presented the college grant to Lindsay at the District 2 annual meeting held on November 2, 2008.

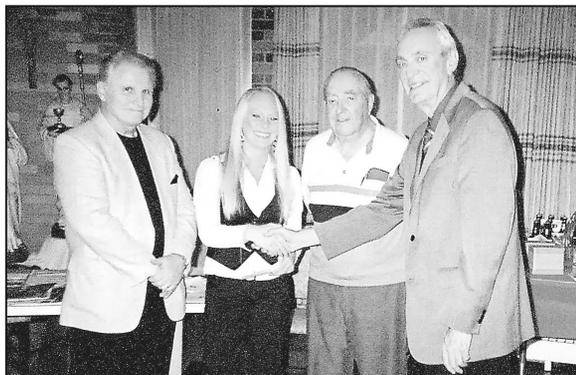


Maddi Linn Cave



Peter John Jurcenko

National President Andrew Rajec and District 2 President John Jurcenko congratulate scholarship winner Lindsay Doise and her uncle Bill Zibrida, members of Branch 153.



Statement as of September 30, 2008 of the **FIRST CATHOLIC SLOVAK UNION OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND CANADA**
ASSETS

	Current Statement Date			4 December 31 Prior Year Net Admitted Assets
	1 Assets	2 Nonadmitted Assets	3 Net Admitted Assets (Cols. 1 - 2)	
1. Bonds.....	167,352,930		167,352,930	173,196,904
2. Stocks:				
2.1 Preferred stocks.....	11,422,040		11,422,040	11,022,040
2.2 Common stocks.....	1,006,126		1,006,126	1,130,626
3. Mortgage loans on real estate:				
3.1 First liens.....	2,170,007		2,170,007	2,261,390
3.2 Other than first liens.....			0	
4. Real estate:				
4.1 Properties occupied by the company (less \$.....0 encumbrances).....	1,248,272		1,248,272	1,288,418
4.2 Properties held for the production of income (less \$.....0 encumbrances).....	944,915		944,915	973,785
4.3 Properties held for sale (less \$.....0 encumbrances).....	562,675		562,675	562,675
5. Cash (\$.....14,662,127), cash equivalents (\$.....0) and short-term investments (\$.....0).....	14,662,127		14,662,127	7,383,627
6. Contract loans (including \$.....0 premium notes).....	761,303		761,303	746,501
7. Other invested assets.....	2,069,545		2,069,545	2,449,543
8. Receivables for securities.....			0	
9. Aggregate write-ins for invested assets.....	0	0	0	0
10. Subtotals, cash and invested assets (Lines 1 to 9).....	202,199,940	0	202,199,940	201,015,509
11. Title plants less \$.....0 charged off (for Title insurers only).....			0	
12. Investment income due and accrued.....	2,765,965		2,765,965	2,558,414
13. Premiums and considerations:				
13.1 Uncollected premiums and agents' balances in the course of collection.....	24,937		24,937	36,412
13.2 Deferred premiums, agents' balances and installments booked but deferred and not yet due (including \$.....0 earned but unbilled premiums).....			0	
13.3 Accrued retrospective premiums.....			0	
14. Reinsurance:				
14.1 Amounts recoverable from reinsurers.....			0	
14.2 Funds held by or deposited with reinsured companies.....			0	
14.3 Other amounts receivable under reinsurance contracts.....			0	
15. Amounts receivable relating to uninsured plans.....			0	
16.1 Current federal and foreign income tax recoverable and interest thereon.....			0	
16.2 Net deferred tax asset.....			0	
17. Guaranty funds receivable or on deposit.....			0	
18. Electronic data processing equipment and software.....			0	
19. Furniture and equipment, including health care delivery assets (\$.....0).....	12,298	12,298	0	0
20. Net adjustment in assets and liabilities due to foreign exchange rates.....			0	
21. Receivables from parent, subsidiaries and affiliates.....			0	
22. Health care (\$.....0) and other amounts receivable.....			0	
23. Aggregate write-ins for other than invested assets.....	29,674	29,674	0	0
24. Total assets excluding Separate Accounts, Segregated Accounts and Protected Cell Accounts (Lines 10 through 23).....	205,032,814	41,972	204,990,842	203,610,335
25. From Separate Accounts, Segregated Accounts and Protected Cell Accounts.....			0	
26. TOTALS (Lines 24 and 25).....	205,032,814	41,972	204,990,842	203,610,335

Statement as of September 30, 2008 of the **FIRST CATHOLIC SLOVAK UNION OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND CANADA**
LIABILITIES, SURPLUS AND OTHER FUNDS

	1 Current Statement Date	2 December 31 Prior Year
1. Aggregate reserve for life contracts (including \$.....0 Modco Reserve).....	179,506,000	176,127,000
2. Aggregate reserve for accident and health contracts (including \$.....0 Modco Reserve).....		
3. Liability for deposit-type contracts (including \$.....0 Modco Reserve).....	1,565,250	1,572,184
4. Contract claims:		
4.1 Life.....	300,000	250,000
4.2 Accident and health.....		
5. Refunds due and unpaid.....		
6. Provisions for refunds payable in following calendar year - estimated amounts:		
6.1 Apportioned for payment.....	400,000	400,000
6.2 Not yet apportioned.....		
7. Premiums and annuity considerations for life and accident and health contracts received in advance less \$.....0 discount; including \$.....0 accident and health premiums.....	312,872	311,333
8. Certificate and contract liabilities not included elsewhere:		
8.1 Surrender values on canceled contracts.....		
8.2 Other amounts payable on reinsurance including \$.....0 assumed and \$.....0 ceded.....		
8.3 Interest maintenance reserve (IMR).....	2,703,447	3,726,188
9. Commissions to fieldworkers due or accrued - life and annuity contracts \$.....0, accident and health \$.....0 and deposit-type contract funds \$.....0.....		3,425
10. Commissions and expense allowances payable on reinsurance assumed.....		
11. General expenses due or accrued.....	573,785	387,700
12. Transfers to Separate Accounts due or accrued (net) (including \$.....0 accrued for expense allowances recognized in reserves).....		
13. Taxes, licenses and fees due or accrued.....	23,149	8,865
14. Unearned investment income.....		
15. Amounts withheld or retained by Society as agent or trustee.....	5,389,147	4,609,041
16. Amounts held for fieldworkers' account, including \$.....0 fieldworkers' credit balances.....		
17. Remittances and items not allocated.....		
18. Net adjustment in assets and liabilities due to foreign exchange rates.....	50,000	50,000
19. Liability for benefits for employees and fieldworkers if not included above.....		
20. Borrowed money \$.....0 and interest thereon \$.....0.....		
21. Miscellaneous liabilities:		
21.1 Asset valuation reserve.....	1,233,006	2,437,842
21.2 Reinsurance in unauthorized companies.....		
21.3 Funds held under reinsurance treaties with unauthorized reinsurers.....		
21.4 Payable to subsidiaries and affiliates.....		
21.5 Drafts outstanding.....		
21.6 Funds held under coinsurance.....		
21.7 Payable for securities.....	99,501	99,501
22. Aggregate write-ins for liabilities.....	514,742	514,992
23. Total liabilities excluding Separate Accounts business (Lines 1 to 22).....	192,670,899	190,498,071
24. From Separate Accounts Statement.....		
25. Total liabilities (Lines 23 to 24).....	192,670,899	190,498,071
26. Aggregate write-ins for other than liabilities and surplus funds.....	0	0
27. Surplus notes.....		
28. Aggregate write-ins for surplus funds.....	0	0
29. Unassigned funds.....	12,319,943	13,112,264
30. Total (Lines 26 through 29) (including \$.....0 in Separate Accounts Statement).....	12,319,943	13,112,264
31. Totals (Lines 25 + 30).....	204,990,842	203,610,335

Statement as of September 30, 2008 of the **FIRST CATHOLIC SLOVAK UNION OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND CANADA**
SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS

	1 Current Year To Date	2 Prior Year To Date	3 Prior Year Ended December 31
1. Premiums and annuity considerations for life and accident and health contracts.....	5,972,852	4,911,370	5,693,973
2. Considerations for supplementary contracts with life contingencies.....			
3. Net investment income.....	9,264,740	9,508,882	12,064,200
4. Amortization of Interest Maintenance Reserve (IMR).....	220,000	225,000	300,469
5. Separate Accounts net gain from operations excluding unrealized gains and losses.....			
6. Commissions and expense allowances on reinsurance ceded.....			
7. Reserve adjustments on reinsurance ceded.....			
8. Miscellaneous income:			
8.1 Income from fees associated with investment management, administration and contract guarantees from Separate Accounts.....			
8.2 Charges and fees for deposit-type contracts.....			
8.3 Aggregate write-ins for miscellaneous income.....	56,767	16,667	28,603
9. Totals (Lines 1 to 8.3).....	15,514,358	14,661,919	18,087,245
10. Death benefits.....	2,014,453	1,891,054	2,394,166
11. Matured endowments (excluding guaranteed annual pure endowments).....	1,588	2,208	2,208
12. Annuity benefits.....	5,972,213	4,373,690	6,299,856
13. Disability benefits and benefits under accident and health contracts including premiums waived \$.....0.....			
14. Surrender benefits and withdrawals for life contracts.....	492,880	347,853	456,455
15. Interest and adjustments on contract or deposit-type contract funds.....	179,768	163,834	218,064
16. Payments on supplementary contracts with life contingencies.....			
17. Increase in aggregate reserve for life and accident and health contracts.....	3,379,000	4,400,000	3,667,000
18. Totals (Lines 10 to 17).....	12,039,902	11,178,639	13,037,749
19. Commissions on premiums, annuity considerations and deposit-type contract funds (direct business only).....	65,677	86,500	97,579
20. Commissions and expense allowances on reinsurance assumed.....			
21. General insurance expenses and fraternal expenses.....	2,108,746	1,813,829	2,287,897
22. Insurance taxes, licenses and fees.....	143,126	126,641	75,113
23. Increase in loading on deferred and uncollected premiums.....			
24. Net transfers to or (from) Separate Accounts net of reinsurance.....			
25. Aggregate write-ins for deductions.....	12,430	(288,486)	211,844
26. Totals (Lines 18 to 25).....	14,369,881	12,917,123	15,710,182
27. Net gain from operations before refunds to members (Line 9 minus Line 26).....	1,144,478	1,744,796	2,377,063
28. Refunds to members.....	287,087	330,270	461,771
29. Net gain from operations after refunds to members and before realized capital gains (losses) (Line 27 minus Line 28).....	857,391	1,414,526	1,915,292
30. Net realized capital gains (losses) less capital gains tax of0 (excluding \$.....0 transferred to the IMR).....	(1,164,531)	8,878	(194,342)
31. Net income (Lines 29 + 30).....	(307,140)	1,423,404	1,720,950
SURPLUS ACCOUNT			
32. Surplus, December 31, prior year.....	13,112,264	11,555,594	11,555,594
33. Net income from operations (Line 31).....	(307,140)	1,423,404	1,720,950
34. Change in net unrealized capital gains (losses) less capital gains tax of \$.....0.....	(1,703,562)	(173,700)	2,984
35. Change in net unrealized foreign exchange capital gain (loss).....			(45,000)
36. Change in nonadmitted assets.....	2,928	(14,175)	(15,159)
37. Change in liability for reinsurance in unauthorized companies.....			
38. Change in reserve on account of change in valuation basis (increase) or decrease.....			
39. Change in asset valuation reserve.....	1,204,835	53,263	152,294
40. Surplus (contributed to) withdrawn from Separate Accounts during period.....			
41. Other changes in surplus in Separate Accounts Statement.....			
42. Change in surplus notes.....			
43. Cumulative effect of changes in accounting principles.....			
44. Change in surplus as a result of reinsurance.....			
45. Aggregate write-ins for gains and losses in surplus.....	10,617	(398,209)	(259,398)
46. Net change in surplus for the year (Lines 33 through 45).....	(792,322)	890,583	1,556,671
47. Surplus as of statement date (Lines 32 + 46).....	12,319,942	12,446,177	13,112,264

Kríza je dôsledkom prahnutia ľudí po rýchlych ziskoch

VATIKÁN (TASR) - Pápež Benedikt XVI. nedávno vyhlásil, že svetová finančná kríza je dôsledkom prahnutia ľudí po krátkodobých ziskoch a pôžitkoch na úkor usilovania sa o všeobecné blaho. Najvyšší predstaviteľ katolíckej cirkvi podrobil kritike ekonomický vývoj počas každoročného mierového posolstva, na ktorom okrem iného poukázal na spojitosť medzi svetovými konfliktami a chudobou. Benedikt XVI. v písomnom posolstve uviedol, že priepasť medzi chudobnými a bohatými sa neustále zvyšuje, čo sa týka aj tých najvyspelejších krajín. Najvyšší pontifex sa často vyjadruje o finančnej kríze. Podľa neho medzinárodné financie by mali smerovať do dlhodobých projektov. Peniaze určené na krátkodobé obraty sa stali "nebezpečnými pre každého, aj pre tých, ktorí zarábajú, keď sa trhom darí".

Oznámenia spolkov a okresov

Členská schôdza spolku sv. Matúša č. 45 IKSJ

Oznamujeme členom Spolku sv. Matúša č.45 Prvej Katolíckej Slovenskej Jednoty, že členská schôdza sa uskutoční v nedeľu 11. januára 2009 o 12.30. hodine po slovenskej svätej omši v osadnej hale Slovenského kostola sv. Jána Nepomuckého na 66th Street First Avenue. Láskaovo žiadame našich členov, aby sa tejto schôdze zúčastnili v hojnom počte.

Mária Jurášiová, pokladníčka



Prezentovali knihu Dva životy Rudolfa Schustera

Bratislava (TASR) – Chlebom a soľou pokrstili 10. decembra knihu Dva životy Rudolfa Schustera v Slovenskom národnom múzeu (SNM). Krstnými rodičmi boli speváčka Darina Laščiaková a spisovateľ Anton Hykisch.

"Rudolf Schuster výrazne ovplyvnil vývoj Slovenska v minulom storočí," povedal na úvod slávnosti generálny riaditeľ SNM Peter Maráky a tým aj zdôvodnil, prečo je predstavenie publikácie v rámci výstavy Ako sme žili? Slovensko v 20. storočí. Aj podľa autora knihy Milana Stana je prínos jeho opísaného objektu v slovenskej histórii veľký. Napísal ju o svojom priateľovi, ktorého dôvernejšie pozná 35 rokov. No nechcel ho predstaviť iba ako komunálneho či vrcholového politika, ale aj ako umelca a všestranného človeka s rôznymi záujmami. Pre knihu sa rozhodol pred dvoma rokmi a odvtedy robil rozhovory nielen s bývalým prezidentom, ale aj s rôznymi umelcami, politikmi a ďalšími, ktorí Rudolfa Schustera dobre poznajú. Kniha vznikla aj na počesť blížiacich sa 75 narodenin exprezidenta. Podľa neho je to napríklad skutočnosť, že slovenčina bola pre medzevského rodáka cudzí jazyk, s ktorým mal ešte aj na strednej škole problém, keďže absolvoval nemeckú školu. Ako vysokoškolák však všetky skúšky robil na prvý pokus. Do jeho súkromného života možno zaradiť pôsobenie v ochotníckom divadle, založenie profesionálnej estrádnej scény na Mladej garde, skutočnosť, že hrával bratislavskú futbalovú malú ligu za Stavokombinát. Zaujímavosťou sa dočítajú, ako sa zoznámil s manželkou, že sa mu páčili Oravčanky, i ktoré filmy mu prevzala televízia. Schuster sa počas pôsobenia v Košiciach zaslúžil o prvú hrajúcu fontánu v republike (1984), rekonštrukciu historického centra, ale aj o boj s prachom z neďalekej Magnezitky či riešenie problémov mesta s nedostatkom vody. Okrem množstva fotografií publikáciu dopĺňa zoznam ocenení či napísaných kníh.



Slovenské železnice sú prvou obeťou krízy

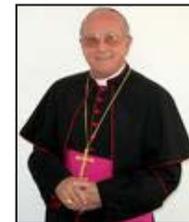
Bratislava (TASR) - Prvou obeťou globálnej finančnej a hospodárskej krízy v SR sú podľa premiéra Roberta Fica slovenské železnice. Do ťažkej situácie sa dostali kvôli očakávanému budúročnému výpadku príjmov z nákladnej železničnej dopravy vo výške 40 %.

Minister financií už podľa Fica pripravil prvé plány finančnej pomoci pre slovenské železnice na prekonanie dopadov krízy. "Ide predovšetkým o vyriešenie zníženia straty, ktorá bola na železničiach v predchádzajúcom roku. Potom musíme hovoriť o cene dopravnej cesty. To sú všetko veci, ktoré stoja veľmi veľa peňazí. Bez peňazí sa problém slovenských železníc, ktorý pretrváva dlhé roky, nedá vyriešiť," priblížil premier. Zároveň odmietol možnosť privatizácie nákladnej železničnej dopravy, ktorú kontroluje štátna spoločnosť ZSSK-Cargo.

Riešenie aktuálnej situácie so zamestnancami železníc, ktorí pred dvoma týždňami vstúpili do štrajkovej pohotovosti, je podľa Fica plne v rukách ministra dopravy Ľubomíra Vážneho. Vláda však v čase krízy žiada aj v tomto prípade sociálnych partnerov o zmier. Železniční odborári vyhlásili štrajkovú pohotovosť 4. decembra. K ich základným požiadavkám patrí prijatie opatrení financovania nákladov za používanie železničnej dopravnej cesty, ktoré zrovnoprávnia železničnú dopravu na dopravnom trhu a vytvoria predpoklady pre jej konkurencioschopnosť v rámci Európy. Okrem toho presadzujú prijatie programu revitalizácie železníc a prijatie osobitných opatrení na úrovni vlády, zamedzujúcich kolapsu a recesii v železničnej doprave v budúcom roku.

Apoštolský nuncius v SR odovzdal prezidentovi posolstvo pápeža

Bratislava (TASR) - Prezident SR Ivan Gašparovič prijal v polovici decembra v Prezidentskom paláci apoštolského nuncia Svätej stolice v SR Maria Giordana, ktorý mu odovzdal posolstvo pápeža Benedikta XVI. pri príležitosti Vianoc. "Bolo to veľmi pozitívne stretnutie, počas ktorého som prezidentovi SR Ivanovi Gašparovičovi s radosťou priniesol posolstvo pokoja od Svätého Otca," povedal nuncius Giordana. Ako ďalej uviedol, hlavným obsahom posolstva je boj proti chudobe a budovanie pokoja. Vo svete je stále mnoho chudoby a v niektorých krajinách jej je toľko, že sa tam nedá vytvárať pokoj. Je preto nevyhnutné chudobu aspoň zmierňovať, keď už nie odstrániť. Vianoce prinášajú veľký dar pokoja a všetci ľudia by sa mali usilovať šíriť ho a vytvárať podmienky pre pokoj, dodal Giordana.



Nuncius Mario Giordana

Prezident Gašparovič s radosťou prijal posolstvo Svätého Otca týkajúce sa pokoja medzi ľuďmi a vyzdvihol dôležitosť vzájomnej solidarity a spolupatričnosti. Ako povedal, úsilie vlády SR i prezidenta korešponduje so sociálnou politikou Vatikánu.

"V úprimnej debata sme zhodnotili ako veľmi dobrú spoluprácu medzi Slovenskou republikou a Vatikánom a pripomenul som aj pozvanie pre Svätého Otca Benedikta XVI. na návštevu Slovenska. Radi by sme hlavu katolíckej cirkvi privítali v roku 2013, kedy si pripomenieme významné výročie príchodu svätých Cyrila a Metoda na územie Slovenska," uviedol prezident.

Nuncius Mario Giordana hodnotiac svoje približne šesťmesačné pôsobenie na Slovensku ocenil veľmi dobré vzťahy so všetkými predstaviteľmi SR a so všetkými slovenskými biskupmi. Súčasne zaželel všetkým obyvateľom SR pokoj a radosť.

Ivan Gašparovič praje občanom SR predovšetkým zdravie a naplnenie ich túžob. Je podľa neho škoda, že vianočné sviatky sa niekedy stávajú viac komerčnou záležitosťou ako sviatkami spolupatričnosti a solidarity, kedy myslíme predovšetkým na iných. "Príal by som si, aby v roku 2009 dobré ľudské vzťahy hrali dominantnú úlohu," povedal prezident.



Nepoškvrnenej Panne (8. december)

Jozef Lúčan Hajnušovský

Buď pozdravená:

kresťanským svetom velebená

Patrónka Slovenska čistá

bez dedičného hriechu počatá

mamička Pána Ježiša Krista.

Buď chválená: Nad priester i čas

na súhviezdach celého vesmíru

v rovinách i valoch našich Sedmikrás

aj v stokách rieky Váhu

kde na kolenách vzývajú

matičku milenú, pannu drahú

chrániacu ich v stáročiach

pred hladom, morom, potopami

vojnyami krutých dôb, údobí

od chorôb a ťažkých múk

aj pekelných diabla zlôb z jeho rúk

objímajúc svätej Panny moc

spínajú dlane prosia o pomoc:

na Starých Horách, v Šaštíne,

Klokočove, Levoči, Tilde

Litmanovej, Marianke aj inde

v časoch bolševizmu skrytú v tajnom stánku

v Turzovke na šikmej hore

tisícky kvietkov kládli verné panny

a v očkách všetkých čarovne im hraje

anjelský úsmev letiac na ich tváre,

keď mládenci svižní dvíhajú

pred kostolmi v máji prvé máje

na chóre organ jemnú pesničku im hraje:

o Panenke panien,

Mamičke mám,

Hviezdičke hviezd,

Kráľovnej kvetov,

Cisárovnej svetov,

Nepoškvrnenej čo večne

panuje nad časmi časov nekonečne!

Žiadosti o dotácie na rok 2009 na krytie aktivít Slovákov žijúcich v zahraničí

Oznamujeme krajanom, krajaným spolkom a organizáciám, že v termíne do 16. februára je možné zasielať na adresu úradu v rámci programu Projekty na pomoc Slovákom žijúcim v zahraničí – rok 2009 žiadosti a dotácie na krytie aktivít Slovákov žijúcich v zahraničí z rozpočtu Úradu pre Slovákov žijúcich v zahraničí. Žiadosti o dotácie treba zaslať na predpísanom tlačive úradu, ktoré nájdete na internetovej stránke Úradu pre Slovákov žijúcich v zahraničí www.uszz.sk v rubrike Dotácie/Tlačivá/Rok 2009/ Žiadosť o dotáciu.

Komisiu pre schvaľovanie projektov na pomoc krajaným spolkom a organizáciám v zahraničí budú predložené len podpísané kompletne žiadosti vrátane povinných príloh, zaslané poštou (nie e-mailom) a v stanovenom termíne. Žiadosti vrátane povinných príloh je nevyhnutné vypísať v eurách a v slovenských korunách (prepočítavať podľa konverzného kurzu, 1 Euro = 30.1260 Sk)

Zároveň Vás žiadame, aby ste v rámci predkladaných žiadostí zaslali všetky povinné prílohy bez ohľadu na skutočnosť ich zaslania v predchádzajúcich obdobiach.

Predpokladáme, že stanovený objem finančných prostriedkov určených na vyššie uvedené program na rok 2009 bude rozdelený v rámci jedného grantového kola.

Vážení krajanovia a milí spolupracovníci, dovoľte mi ešte Vám popriať príjemné prežitie Vianočných sviatkov a úspešný celý nový rok!

Na záver by som sa s Vami chcela i rozlúčiť a poďakovať sa za spoluprácu, nakoľko odchádzam z Úradu pre Slovákov žijúcich v zahraničí.

Úrad pre Slovákov žijúcich v zahraničí, Radlinského 13, 817 80 Bratislava, Slovenská republika. Tel.: 00421 2 57 2005 30; Fax: 00421 2 57 2005 55; e-mail: katarina.gulasova@uszz.gov.sk <http://www.uszz.sk>

S pozdravom a priáním všetkého dobrého

Mgr. art. Katarína Gulášová
Teritoriálny odbor



V prípade neudelenia víz do USA treba kontaktovať veľvyslanectvo

BRATISLAVA (TASR) - Ministerstvo zahraničných vecí SR v rámci bezvízového programu ciest do USA odporúča občanom, ktorým v minulosti neudelila americká strana víza alebo im bol odopretý vstup do krajiny, aby v prípade pochybnosti kontaktovali veľvyslanectvo USA v Bratislave na adrese <http://slovakia.usembassy.gov>

Rezort diplomacie zároveň upozorňuje, že cestovná autorizácia ESTA negarantuje automatický vstup na územie USA. Konečné rozhodnutie o ňom vydá pracovník Úradu colnej správy a ochrany hraníc Spojených štátov amerických na vstupnom letisku alebo v prístave pri príchode. To platí pre všetkých cestujúcich z krajín s vízovým, ako aj bezvízovým režimom. Informoval o tom v stredu 17. 12. 2008 tlačový a komunikačný odbor Ministerstva zahraničných vecí SR.



SACR zrealizovala Road Show po amerických mestách *European Quartet One Melody*

Bratislava (TASR) - Slovenská agentúra pre cestovný ruch (SACR) zrealizovala v spolupráci s ďalšími krajinami Vyšehradskej štvorky (V4) propagačnú Road Show v USA s cieľom zviditeľniť stredo európsky región na americkom trhu.

Od 8. do 12. decembra navštívila mestá San Diego, Los Angeles, Portland a Seattle. Súčasťou projektu boli pracovné rokovania subjektov cestovného ruchu z krajín V4 s možnosťou priameho kontaktu s americkými partnermi. "USA predstavujú pre Slovensko krajinu s vysokým trhovým potenciálom. Na účinnejšie presadenie Slovenska ako destinácie cestovného ruchu na americkom trhu využíva SACR spoločné marketingové aktivity krajín V4," uviedla generálna riaditeľka SACR Svetlana Gavorová.

Zástupcovia Slovenskej agentúry pre cestovný ruch predstavili americkým zástupcom (travel agent) ponuku cestovného ruchu na Slovensku formou dvoch prezentácií. Jedna bola zameraná všeobecne na prezentáciu celého Slovenska a druhá sa špecializovala na hlavné mesto SR Bratislavu. Pre americké subjekty cestovného ruchu pripravili aj propagačné materiály o Slovensku, CD nosiče, ako aj zoznam nastupujúcich cestovných kancelárií na Slovensku.

Road Show po amerických mestách je jednou zo spoločných marketingových aktivít zoskupenia krajín V4, ktoré sa od roku 2003 European Quartet One Melody na zámorských trhoch prezentujú spoločne pod jednotným logom a mottom. Hlavným cieľom projektu v USA je informovať amerických cestovných zástupcov o aktuálnej ponuke cestovného ruchu v krajinách V4 a upevniť spoluprácu s americkými partnermi v cestovnom ruchu.

Minister zahraničných vecí Ján Kubiš odchádza z funkcie, získal post v OSN

Bratislava (TASR) - Minister zahraničných vecí Ján Kubiš (nominant Smeru-SD) odchádza zo svojej funkcie. Oznamoval to 17. decembra na mimoriadnej tlačovej besede v Bratislave s tým, že prijal ponuku generálneho tajomníka OSN Pan Kimuna pracovať na pozícii výkonného tajomníka Európskej hospodárskej komisie OSN so sídlom v Ženeve. Predseda vlády SR Robert Fico (Smer-SD) povedal, že nie je príliš nadšený z toho, že Kubiš odchádza, „ale záujmy SR musia mať prednosť pred záujmami koalície“. Kubišov nový post považuje za úspech SR a slovenskej diplomacie. „Pozícia, ktorú zaujmete, je mimoriadne dôležitá najmä pre to, že tvorí súčasť vrcholového vedenia OSN,“ poznamenal premiér s tým, že si mimoriadne váži aj to, že Kubiš mával svoj vlastný názor, ktorý presadzoval. Závery, ku ktorým dospeli, však boli podľa Fica vždy v prospech celej SR. Rovnako mu poďakoval za jeho angažovanosť v prípade slovensko-maďarských vzťahoch. „Urobili ste tu fantastický kus práce a aj svojou profesionalitou ste prispeli k tomu, že prišlo k upokojeniu napätia, ktoré vzniklo pred niekoľkými mesiacmi,“ poďakoval premiér. Fico zároveň informoval, že meno nového ministra oznámi, až bude jasné, v ktorý januárový deň Kubiš opustí funkciu. „Nebudem ale presadzovať straníckeho kandidáta,“ uistil. Minister zahraničných vecí potvrdil, že s premiérom hovoril o istých kandidátoch na danú pozíciu. „Je to na pánovi premiérovi, aby si zvolil môjho nástupcu podľa jeho priorít,“ vysvetlil. Premiér zdôraznil, že by chcel mať vo vláde podobný pozitívny zjav ako je súčasný šéf diplomacie. „Mám svoje typy, ale bude to človek, ktorý spôsobom správania sa, vystupovania a názormi bude presne zodpovedať kritériám, ktoré panujú vo vláde SR,“ uviedol s tým, že pravdepodobne sa bude orientovať na niekoho z oblasti kariérnej diplomacie. „V tejto vláde sa pracovalo dobre a ja som sa v tejto práci našiel. Pre každého profesionála je byť členom vlády mimoriadna výzva. Možnosť hájiť záujmy SR som bral ako česť a výzvu,“ upozornil odchádzajúci minister. Ján Kubiš, o ktorého odchode z vlády sa hovorilo dlhší čas, už v minulosti pôsobil v službách OSN. Vrcholom jeho diplomatickej kariéry bola funkcia generálneho tajomníka OBSE.



Ján Kubiš



Michal a Anna Matáš

Manželia Matášovi oslávili svoju diamantovú svadbu

Dňa 9. novembra 2008, oslávili svoje 60. výročie manželstva Michal a Anna Matášovi. Naši jubilanti, ktorí sa dožili krásneho veku Michal 82 a Anna 77, sú obaja členmi čísla 746 Prvej Katolíckej Slovenskej Jednoty. Sviatosť manželského stavu prijali 1. júla 1948 v kostole Ružencovej Panny Márie v dedinke Lekárovce na Východnom Slovensku, kde pred dvoma rokmi odišli natrvalo.

Radosná udalosť spojená s oslavou sa uskutočnila v hoteli JALTA v Michalovciach, kde boli obklopení priateľmi, príbuznými, nevestami, vnúčatami, zaťmi a pravnúčatami. Do tanca vyhrávala populárna skupina Zemplín.

Dečry Ružena Lőrincová (Matáš) s rodinou a Emília Filak s manželom a dcérou im boli nesmierne vďační za ich lásku a obetavosť. Vnúčata Milan, Michelle, Sabka a pravnúčata Evka, Leuško, Katka a Miško vyslovili mnoho vinšov, „aby ich Pán Boh aj naďalej žehnal na každom kroku dobrým zdravím a Božím požehnaním, priáním všetkého najlepšieho, veľa lásky a všetko čo si len ich srdce želá „.

Drahí rodičia, ešte raz Vám ďakujeme za náš život a Vašu nekonečnú lásku. Za všetko „Nech je Zvelebené meno Pánovo!“ Oslava tohto krásneho jubilea, ktorého sa im Pán Boh doprial dožiť, bola skutočne nezabudnuteľným dňom pre všetkých zúčastnených.

Emília Filak

Krátke správy zo Slovenska

Investície do umenia sú, ako sa zdá, v čase krízy populárne. Na aukcii, ktorá sa konala začiatkom decembra v bratislavskej aukčnej sieni Soga, sa podarilo vydražiť obrazy takmer za 11 miliónov korún (365,133 eur). V ponuke bolo 431 umeleckých diel. Úspech mali slovenskí maliari Ľudovít Fulla a Martin Benka. Na prekvapenie však dielo Juliusa Victora Bergera nevydražili, pričom na zahraničných aukciách býva tvorba tohto umelca žiadaná.

Od leta budúceho roka zaniknú v Európe aj na Slovensku stolové vína. Spotrebiteľia tak budú mať chvíľu problém, aby vedeli, aké víno kupujú. Slovensko musí totiž úplne zmeniť doterajšie označovanie vín, prikazuje to Brusel. Súčasne sa zavedú dve nové označenia pre kvalitnejšie vína.

Korunové bankovky a mince bude Národná banka Slovenska (NBS) počas prechodu na euro postupne sťahovať z obehu a ničiť. Korunové bankovky budú rozrezané a následne spálené pri teplote vyššej ako 2,200 stupňov Celzia, a to z toho dôvodu, že obsahujú metalický prúžok. Slovenské mince budú zasa mechanicky zničené, roztavené a odpredané ako druhotná surovina.

Po zavedení eura sa jedna z najskôr viditeľných pozitívnych výhod prejaví v exporte ako súčasť slovenskej ekonomiky, upozornil guvernér Národnej banky Slovenska Ivan Šramko. Slovenská ekonomika je podľa neho veľmi otvorená, je závislá na exporte. V exporte je dôležitý vývoj meny a vývoj výmenného kurzu slovenskej koruny hlavne k euru, pretože hlavnými obchodnými partnermi SR sú práve krajiny, ktoré používajú euro. Práve tento kurz v rámci exportu zohral v minulosti veľmi negatívnu úlohu.

Výroba modelu Škoda Octavia bude na Slovensku pokračovať aj v budúcom roku, a to aj napriek globálnej finančnej kríze. Práve Škoda Octavia patrí už roky k najobľúbenejším modelom na trhu v SR. Od roku 2000 sa na Slovensku predalo 27,024 vozidiel tohto modelu, z toho 6,387 kusov za 11 mesiacov tohto roka.

Veľtrh Trenčín mesto módy sa v budúcom roku konať nebude. Podľa výkonného riaditeľa Asociácie textilného a odevného priemyslu SR Dušana Gajdúška je hlavnou príčinou jeho zániku to, že vykazoval zjavné posuny smerom k zníženiu počtu vystavovateľov i návštevníkov. Rozhodnutie o ukončení berie ako fakt, súčasne však nevylučuje, že v budúcnosti aktivity podobného druhu sa oživia. Textilný priemysel na Slovensku sa dostal do fázy, že všetky veľké podniky sú v podstate rozčlenené na menšie alebo zanikli, prípadne zredukovali svoju výrobu. Z tohto dôvodu nebol záujem robiť veľtrh tak ako doteraz. Medzinárodný veľtrh módy a odievania Trenčín mesto módy má za sebou 40 ročníkov, na ktorých prezentoval módne trendy. Neodmysliteľne tak patrí k mestu Trenčín. V roku 1998 zažil svoj vrchol, zúčastnilo sa na ňom 250 vystavovateľov. Minulý rok ich bolo iba 60.

Nórsky kráľ Harald V. udelil slovenskému spisovateľovi, prekladateľovi a vydavateľovi Milanovi Richterovi Nórsky kráľovský Rád za zásluhy. Insígnie a diplom vyznamenania Richterovi odovzdala na slávnostnej ceremónii veľvyslankyňa Nórskeho kráľovstva v Bratislave, J.E. Brit Lovseth 17. decembra 2008. Nórsky kráľovský Rád za zásluhy (stupeň dôstojník) udeľuje monarcha Milanovi Richterovi za upevňovanie kontaktov medzi Nórskom a Slovenskom, najmä v oblasti kultúry. V odôvodnení sa ďalej uvádza, že ako prvý Chargé d'Affaires Slovenskej republiky v Nórsku Richter vybudoval silné a trvácne vzťahy medzi oboma krajinami. Milan Richter do slovenčiny preložil romány Sigrída Undseta, básne a poviedky Björnstjerna Björnsona a poéziu súčasných nórskejších básnikov. Nórsky kráľovský Rád za zásluhy založil kráľ Olav V. v roku 1985. Najvyššia trieda (Veľký kríž) tohto vyznamenania je udeľovaná výlučne štátnikom.

Slovenský sen končí a investorov ubúda. Dôsledkom finančnej krízy bude menší počet investičných projektov. Kým počas minuloročných (2007) troch štvrtrokov sa zrealizovalo 48 projektov v celkovej výške 1.1 miliardy eur, v tomto roku sa ich počet za rovnaké obdobie znížil o 20 a objem investícií klesol na 281.9 milióna eur. Kým v roku 2007 putovali investície do automobilového, elektrotechnického a strojárského priemyslu, v roku 2008 smerovali investície do chémie, plastov a cestovného ruchu. Za najväčší dôvod poklesu investícií sa považuje zhoršovanie ekonomickej situácie a vyvrcholenie v podobe krízy práve v ekonomikách, ktoré boli najväčšími investormi na Slovensku - USA, Nemecko, Veľká Británia.

Získať vysokoškolský titul s opísanou diplomovou prácou bude ľahšie. Vysokým školám pri kontrole pomôže nový softvér, ktorý pre ne pripravuje ministerstvo školstva, ktoré celý projekt aj zafinancuje. Seminárne, bakalárske či diplomové práce má už od septembra preveriť systém s centrálnou databázou tisícov prác. Vysoké školy si podľa hovorkyne ministerstva školstva Dany Špankovej majú vytvoriť vlastné databázy prác svojich študentov a ministerstvo pripraví softvér, ktorý takéto práce dokáže spojiť a porovnať.

Kým viaceré firmy na východnom Slovensku kvôli odbytovej a finančnej kríze prepúšťajú, závod švédskeho koncernu SCA (Svenska Cellulosa Aktienbolaget) Hygiene Products v Gemerskej Hôrke v okrese Rožňava rozširuje výrobu. Už dva

mesiace funguje nová výrobná hala na hygienický sortiment, ktorá je súčasťou novej investície vo výške niekoľko desiatok miliónov eur. Ako informovalo vedenie jej definitívne ukončenie v roku 2010 predpokladá zvýšenie výroby o 25 až 30 %. Prinesie približne 200 nových interných pracovných miest a ďalších 80 vyvolaných pracovných príležitostí v externom prostredí. Bude to teda významný prínos pre pracovný trh v okrese Rožňava, v ktorom je približne 20-% miera nezamestnanosti. Vedenie závodu, ktorý v súčasnosti zamestnáva približne 1,200 interných a externých pracovníkov, nemá obavy, že by ich expanziu ohrozila finančná kríza. Za 16 rokov pôsobenia investoval koncern SCA v Gemerskej Hôrke približne 6 miliárd Sk (199.16 milióna eur). V tomto roku očakávajú obchodný obrat na úrovni vlnajška - 5 miliárd Sk (165.96 milióna eur) a zisk vyšší o 10 %, čo predstavuje približne 315 miliónov Sk (10.45 milióna eur).

Kapustnica, vyprážený kapor a majonézový šalát je tradičné vianočné jedlo Slovákov. Ponuka slovenských reštaurácií na Štedrý večer však býva obmedzená, vybrať si môžete prevažne z pravidelného menu. V krajských či okresných mestách okrem Bratislavy je možnosť stráviť Vianoce v reštaurácii podstatne menšia, pretože podniky dávajú svojim zamestnancom na tento deň dovolenky. Rovnaká situácia je aj v turistických centrách, či vo Vysokých Tatrách.

Novela o vysokých školách umožní vysokým školám (VŠ) vstupovať do obchodných spoločností so svojím majetkom a dokonca za určitých pravidiel aj so štátnymi dotáciami. Novela zároveň otvorí zahraničným VŠ slovenský vysokoškolský trh a tie budú mať nárok na štátnu dotáciu na takej vysokej úrovni, ako majú slovenské VŠ. Minister školstva SR Ján Mikolaj chce novelou tiež zvýšiť mobilitu vysokoškolákov uznávaním časti štúdia na inej VŠ či fakulte vrátane zahraničnej VŠ. Podľa neho je to priestor na to, aby sa investície súkromného sektora dostali prostredníctvom VŠ do vedeckovýskumných projektov. Vysoké školy sa však podľa ministra nemusia báť, že by prišli ako obchodné spoločnosti o svoj majetok.

TASR a slovenské časopisy



Milanovi Rúfusovi vzdali poctu

Bratislava (TASR) - Matica slovenská (MS) v spolupráci s Literárnym informačným centrom 9. decembra uviedla do života slovensko - anglický výber z poézie a esejí Milana Rúfusa pod názvom *Nieš' bremeno a spievať*. Ako informoval hovorca Matice slovenskej Stanislav Bajanič, uvedenie knihy a zaslanie gratulačného listu básnikovi je štartom do viacerých podujatí venovaných 80. výročiu jeho narodenia.

Výber *Nieš' bremeno a spievať* je ilustrovaný výtvarným dielom Vladimíra Kompánka. Pre vydavateľstvo MS ho zostavil Viliam Marčok, anglický preklad pripravil John Minahane a graficky publikáciu riešil Peter Ďurík. Knihu uviedol do života predseda Matice slovenskej Jozef Markuš a riaditeľ Národného inštitútu slovenského jazyka a literatúry MS Miroslav Bielik.



FOTO TASR - Tomáš Halász

Na snímke vodný slalomár Michal Martikán, ktorý získal ocenenie Športovec roka v kategórii jednotlivec počas slávnostného vyhlásenia 50. ročníka ankety OVB Športovec roka 2008 v Bratislave 18. decembra 2008.



Vianočný pozdrav Mons. Františka Tondru

Ako každý rok pred Vianocami, aj toho roku moja myseľ ulieta k všetkým Slovákom v Amerike. Chcem všetkým pozdraviť z príležitosti krásnych sviatkov, ktoré nám Cirkev ponúka na výročie narodenia nášho Pána Ježiša Krista. Vianoce sú sviatkami celej Cirkvi, ktoré sa intenzívne, radostne a zbožne prežívajú v rodinách. Dnes je to veľmi dôležité povedať, lebo rodina nabera iný štýl života ako tomu bolo v minulosti. Napriek všetkým zmenám, ktorým sa môžeme vyhnúť, predsa rodina musí ostať rodinou so svojimi podstatnými vlastnosťami a úlohami. Prajem všetkým Slovákom v Amerike, aby si zachovali svoje nezabudnuteľné tradície, vernosť viere a Cirkvi.



Mons. František Tondra

Rád spomínam na svoju nedávnu návštevu na Festivale slovenského dedičstva v New Jersey. Tam som mohol vidieť, ako si Slováci v Amerike zachovávajú a prežívajú svoju vieru i krásne ľudové zvyky, piesne a tance.

Na Slovensku je veľká radosť z toho, že môžeme cestovať do USA bez víz. Je to prejav vzájomnej dôvery.

Milí rodáci, prajem Vám krásne a milostiplné prežitie vianočných sviatkov a do roku 2009 veľa Božieho požehnania.

Dr. František Tondra
spišský biskup



Betlehenské svetlo z Baziliky Narodenia Pána v Svätej zemi



FOTO TASR - Tomáš Halász

Slovenskí skauti odovzdali 14. decembra 2008 v Bratislave Betlehenské svetlo – symbolický plamienok z Baziliky Narodenia Pána v Svätej zemi do rúk prezidenta SR Ivana Gašparoviča. Na snímke zľava skaut, prvá dáma Silvia Gašparovičová a prezident SR Ivan Gašparovič.

Biskupi požehnali koledníkov Dobrej noviny

Vyššie tritisíc detí požehnali slovenskí biskupi počas slávnostných svätých omší v polovici decembra v Bratislave, Košiciach, Nitre, Poprade, Prešove, Rimavskej Sobote, Sabinove, Trnave, vo Vranove nad Topľou, v Žiari nad Hronom a Žiline a vyslali ich ako koledníkov Dobrej noviny ohlasovať počas Vianoc radostnú zvesť o narodení Krista.

„Koledníci šíria nežným spôsobom kultúru života,“ zdôraznil vo svojom príhovore bratislavský arcibiskup Stanislav Zvolenský. Banskobystrický biskup Mons. Rudolf Baláz vyzval koledníkov, aby nielen zbierali peniaze, ale aj pretvárali svoje vnútro. Nitriansky biskup Viliam Judák deti povzbudil, aby nestrácali nádej na rozdávanie radosti ani v prípade, že by v niektorej farnosti zostal čo i len jediný koledník. Košický pomocný biskup Stanislav Stolárik malých ohlasovateľov pozoval, aby boli koledníkmi počas celého svojho života, všade, kde budú pôsobiť.

Deti priniesli ako špeciálny obetný dar použité poštové známky. Tie sa ďalej spracujú, predajú zberateľom a výťažok z ich predaja pomôže misionárom. V Spišskej diecéze a Košickej arcidiecéze zbierali deti aj farbičky, perá, ceruzky a oblečenie, ktoré poputujú k deťom v detskom domove v Podolínci a Remeckých Hámroch. Počas Vianoc na celom Slovensku koledovalo okolo 25-tisíc detí a dospelých. Z výťažku koledníckej zbierky budú podporené rozvojové projekty pre núdznych v Keni, južnom Sudáne a Ugande.

Slávnostné sväté omše spojené s požehnaním koledníkov sa na Slovensku už tradične konajú na Tretiu adventnú nedeľu, alebo v sobotu pred ňou. Tento rok požehnali biskupi koledníkov po prvý raz aj v novozriadených diecézach v Bratislave a Žiline, kde je aj Tretia adventná nedeľa zároveň Misijným dňom detí.

TK KBS

NA NOVÝ ROK 2009

*Nech Vás Betlehenský Ježiško požehnáva,
dá dobrého zdravia a od všetkého zlého uchováva.*

*Nech požehná celú Vašu a aj našu rodinu,
obdari Božími darmi, moju peknú rodnú dedinu.*

*Nech požehná celému slovenskému národu,
by vždy rovno kráčal a neupadol zase v porobu.*

*Pre vodcov národa, nech aj Božie zákony platia,
nech očami spravodlivosti, náš národ riadia.*

*Nech Betlehenská žiara, nad ním stále svieti,
by požehnal všetky, po svete roztratené deti.*

*A keď na Kráľovej holi, vzplanú lásky vatry,
nech šťastným rokom je, dvetisíc-deviaty.*

Jozef Smák