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Easter Greeting from the President

On behalf of the Board of Directors, the Home Office staff, and myself, I would like to extend to all of our FCSU members a very blessed and joyous Easter! This is a time for celebration, a time to rejoice in the Good News that Christ has risen! Easter is a special occasion, one that brings families together to commemorate the resurrection of our Savior. Whether it's gathering around the table to share a meal, attending Mass together, or participating in long-held traditions, this time of year offers an opportunity to reflect on the blessings of our faith and the love we share with those closest to us.

Many of us have our own beloved Easter traditions, from egg hunts and fish fries to the tradition of dyeing eggs or baking Slovak Easter breads and coffee cakes. These customs are part of what makes Easter so meaningful to us, creating memories that we cherish and pass on through the generations. It's a season rich in joy and reflection, where we have the chance to reconnect with those who matter most and reflect on the deep significance of what we are celebrating.

As we prepare to celebrate this sacred time, it is easy to get caught up in the commercialized aspects of the holiday. In the midst of all this, it is important to remember that Easter is, above all, one of the holiest seasons



Kenneth A. Arendt
President, CEO

of the Catholic Church. The journey through Lent, leading up to Easter Sunday, is a time of profound reflection. It is an opportunity to prepare spiritually, to remember Christ's ultimate sacrifice, and to celebrate His triumph over death.

Lent is a season that calls us to self-discipline, to sacrifice, and to reflection on the love and gift that God has given us through His Son, Jesus Christ. During these 40 days, we participate in acts of penance, mirroring Christ's 40 days in the desert, and we come to appreciate more deeply the significance of Christ's passion and death. Lent reminds us of the depth of God's love for us, a love that we may sometimes overlook in the midst of our busy lives. It is through the practices of Lent that we prepare our hearts to truly embrace the joy and hope that Easter brings.

We also observe Holy Week, a time to remember Christ's final days before His crucifixion and resurrection. From Palm Sunday to Good Friday, Holy Saturday, and the glorious Easter Vigil, Holy Week invites us to join in prayer and reflection, remembering the sacrifice that Jesus made for our salvation and expressing our gratitude for His love and mercy. It's a time for us to renew our commitment to follow Christ and to live out the message of His resurrection in our daily lives.

Whether your Easter celebrations include age-old customs or new practices, let us all take this time to come together with our loved ones, reflect on the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and share in the joy of His victory over sin and death. As we gather to celebrate, let us be mindful of the eternal hope and love that Easter brings to each of us. May this Easter season be a time of deep reflection, renewal, and joy for you and your family. Let us continue to share God's love with one another and honor the sacrifice Christ made for us all.

May you find peace, hope, and renewal in the resurrection of our Savior. Wishing you a blessed and joyful Easter!

Site of the 2026 Quadrennial National Convention



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THE
DATE**

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— SOUTH CAROLINA —

June 20-23, 2026

FOR GOD AND NATION - ZA BOHA A NÁROD



Father Stephen Furdek and twelve other men formed the First Catholic Slovak Union in 1890. The Jednota branches were instrumental in the founding of hundreds of Catholic parishes in the United States and Canada. The first edition of its renowned bilingual newspaper was published

in 1891. Today, *Jednota* is still read by members and people interested in Catholic and Slovak life all over the world.



FIRST CATHOLIC SLOVAK UNION of the United States of America and Canada

FCSU Corporate Center
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Enhancing your financial future through fraternalism.

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Shannon Travise • editor@fcsu.com

First Catholic Slovak Union, Attn: "JEDNOTA"
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Message from the National Chaplain

The writers of the Gospels use many different terms when describing Jesus. Among these titles are Lamb of God, Word of God, Savior, Christ, Teacher, Lord, and many others.

Luke's account of the Lord's resurrection is proclaimed at the Easter Vigil Mass this year. Luke presents a title that perfectly describes for us who the Risen Lord is. He is the "Living One." "Why do you seek the living one among the dead?" the two heavenly messengers ask Mary Magdalene and the other women.

In Jesus, the Living One, we are assured there is life after death. We place our hope and trust that all who live for him here and now will share in his life in glory.

Through Jesus, the Living One, we discover we are loved by God, who desires nothing more than for us to love him in return with all our heart, soul, mind and strength.

With Jesus, the Living One, we pray one day that we will see him face to face for eternity.

You and your loved ones will be remembered in my Easter Masses. Pán Ježiš Kristus vstal z mŕtvych! Radujme sa!



**Rev. Thomas Nasta
Chaplain**

MESSAGE OF THE HOLY FATHER ON THE OCCASION OF THE SLOVAKIAN NATIONAL JUBILEE PILGRIMAGE

Dear brothers in the Episcopate,

Dear priests, men and women religious,

Dear sisters, dear brothers in the Lord!

I would very much have liked to be present with you to share this moment of faith and communion, but I am still in convalescence and so I will join you through prayer and with all my affection.

I welcome you all, here in Rome for the national pilgrimage during this Jubilee year. I greet His Excellency Archbishop Bernard Bober, president of the Episcopal Conference, bishops, priests, consecrated men and women and lay faithful. A warm greeting goes to the civil authorities: in particular, I am pleased to address Mr. President Peter Pellegrini.

Your pilgrimage is a concrete sign of the desire to renew faith, to strengthen the bond with the Successor of Peter and to bear witness joyfully to the hope that does not disappoint (cf. Rm 5:5), because it is born of the love that sprang from the pierced Heart of Christ and poured into us by the Holy Spirit. From this hope, this Jubilee calls us to become pilgrims in all our life, and the journey to Rome, with the passage through the Holy Doors and the visits to the tombs of the Apostles and the Martyrs, is the pledge of this journey every day, reaching towards eternity. For you, Slovak sisters and brothers, it is an itinerary that is part of the rich Christian tradition of your land, made fruitful by the witness of Saints Cyril and Methodius and many other saints, who have irrigated it with the Gospel of Christ for more than a thousand years.

Faith, dear friends, is a treasure to be shared with joy. Every time brings with it challenges and hardships, but also opportunities to grow in confidence and in abandonment to God. And like the Virgin Mary, who with her humble and courageous "yes" opened the door to the redemption of the world, also our "yes", simple and sincere, can become a tool in the hands of God to achieve something great. To welcome His plan does not mean having all the answers, but trusting that, wherever He leads us, He precedes us also with His grace. To say "yes" today can allow us to open up new horizons of faith, hope and peace, for us and those whom the Lord makes us encounter. With a synodal style, listen to what the Spirit is saying to your Churches, without fearing the new but discerning in it the initiative of God, who always surprises us.

Sisters and brothers, continue to walk together, pastors and faithful, keeping your eyes on Jesus, our salvation. May the Virgin Mary, Patroness of Slovakia, whom you venerate in particular as Our Lady of the Seven Sorrows, and who, precisely because of her union with the passion of her Son, is Mother of Hope, guide and protect you. I cordially bless all of you, your families and your people. Do not forget to pray for me.

From the Vatican, 27 March 2025

FRANCIS

NEWSPAPER GUIDELINES

All copy is due by 4:30pm, THE MONDAY THE WEEK BEFORE THE ISSUE DATE, unless otherwise stated because of special holiday scheduling. All articles are reviewed for possible publication. FCSU reserves the right to edit and format submitted articles and pictures. Remember that JEDNOTA is printed MONTHLY. Submit your articles in ample time for them to be received at the Home Office.

ISSUE DEADLINES

MAY 2025 ISSUE

COPY DATE - Monday, May 5
ISSUE DATE - Wednesday, May 14

JUNE 2025 ISSUE

COPY DATE - Monday, June 2
ISSUE DATE - Wednesday, June 11

National Vice President's Easter Greeting

Every year, the Easter season brings with it the return of Springtime, images of warmer weather, and the return of green lawns and leaves on the trees. It's a season of renewal. While we celebrate the return of Spring and the Easter holiday, let us take time to thank God for the wonderful gifts and blessing he has given us.

On behalf of my family, I wish you all a Happy and Blessed Easter Season.



Damian D. Nasta
National Vice President

Executive Secretary's Easter Message

This special time of the year reminds us of renewal, hope, and the beauty of life. As spring awakens, we begin to prepare for Easter. Let us embrace the joy and warmth of family, LOVE, and tradition.

Inspired by Slovak customs, may we cherish the vibrancy of decorated eggs, and the symbolic energy of willow branches which remind us of good health and happiness. May these traditions inspire us to celebrate the richness of our culture.

As we celebrate the rising of Christ, I wish you days filled with peace, prosperity, and delightful moments that leave lasting positive memories.

As Easter brings new beginnings, let it ignite positivity and gratitude in our hearts. Have open hearts to welcome this season to growth and transformation to carry forward the light and love that make our lives truly meaningful.

Veselú Velkú Noc.

May your Easter celebrations be as colorful and joyful as the spirit of Slovakia itself.

Kristus Vstal z Mrtvych



Kevin J. Collins
Executive Secretary, COO

National Treasurer's Easter Greeting

As we continue through our Lenten journey, preparing our hearts for Holy Week and Easter, we are invited into a sacred time of reflection, prayer, and renewal. This season calls us to deepen our faith, drawing inspiration from Christ's time in the desert. It is a time of sacrifice, generosity, and love – an opportunity to turn inward in contemplation and outward in acts of kindness, sharing God's mercy with those around us.

Easter is a season of renewal, hope, and gratitude. In this time of joy, we give thanks to you.

My family wishes the peace and joy of the Risen Christ fill your hearts and homes this Lent and Easter season.



John V. Tokarsky
National Treasurer

Branch stipend checks have been mailed.
If you qualified and have not received your check,
please contact the Home Office at 800.533.6682, ext. 122.

UPCOMING EVENTS



APRIL 2025

- 4/12 Branch 450 - Meeting, Brooklyn, OH (RSVP by 4/9)
- 4/13 Branch 173 - Meeting, Mountain Top, PA (RSVP)
- 4/18 **Good Friday - Home Office Closed**
- 4/20 **Easter Sunday**
- 4/23 Branch 682 - Meeting, Struthers, OH
- 4/24 Branch 260 - Meeting, Struthers, OH
- 4/26 District 17 - Meeting, Scranton, PA (RSVP by 4/16)
- 4/26 **FCSU International Bowling Tournament, Kent, OH**
- 4/27 **FCSU International Bowling Tournament, Kent, OH**
- 4/27 Branch 1 - Meeting, Rocky River, OH
- 4/27 Branch 199 - Meeting, Latrobe, PA
- 4/27 Branch 716 - Meeting, New York, NY
- 4/27 District 6 - Meeting, West Mifflin, PA (RSVP by 4/19)

MAY 2025

- 5/1 Branch 200 - Meeting, Ford City, PA
- 5/2 Branch 746 - Mass, Linden, NJ
- 5/3 Branch 112 - Meeting, Minersville, PA
- 5/3 Branch 166 - Meeting, Binghamton, NY
- 5/4 Branch 24 - Meeting, Walton Hills, OH (RSVP by 4/28)
- 5/4 District 7 - Meeting, Johnstown, PA
- 5/10 Branch 746 - NOAH Production, Lancaster, PA
- 5/11 **Mother's Day**
- 5/15 Branch 38 - Meeting (Zoom)
- 5/18 Branch 276 - Meeting, McKeesport, PA
- 5/18 Branch 731 - Meeting, Boardman, OH
- 5/20 Branch 313 - Meeting, Mokena, IL (RSVP by 5/10)
- 5/26 **Memorial Day - Home Office Closed**

JUNE 2025

- 6/1 Branch 45 - Meeting, New York, NY
- 6/1 District 12 - Hilinka District Picnic, Belle Vernon, PA (RSVP by 5/28)
- 6/6 Branch 746 - Mass, Linden, NJ
- 6/8 Branch 19 - Meeting (Zoom)
- 6/8 Branch 89 - Baseball Game, Franklin, WI (RSVP by 5/4)
- 6/8 Branch 213 - Meeting, Pittsburgh, PA (RSVP)
- 6/8 Branch 587 - Meeting, Aliquippa, PA (RSVP)
- 6/8 District 1 - Meeting (Zoom)
- 6/14 Branch 153 - Meeting, Harwood Heights, IL (RSVP by 6/4)
- 6/14 Branch 484 - Meeting, Indiana, PA
- 6/16 Branch 228 - Meeting, Lorain, OH
- 6/21 **National Picnic - Knoebels, Elysburg, PA**
- 6/21 District 8 - Meeting, Elysburg, PA
- 6/22 Branch 162 - Meeting, Connellsville, PA (RSVP by 6/16)
- 6/28 **National Picnic - Wiegand Lake Park, Novelty, OH**

For more information, go to the Branch and District announcement pages.

The Blessing of Easter Baskets

Traditional Easter foods are gathered in "blessing baskets" comprising of cooked eggs, bread, preserved meat, beetroot and horse-radish, along with dairy products like syrek (a cheese dish) and hrudka (a loaf made from eggs and milk), as well as paska sweetbread.

FCSU National Chaplain Fr. Thomas Nasta will be blessing Easter baskets via live-stream on Holy Saturday, April 19 at 12:00pm (EST). The blessing will be live streamed from Our Lady of Grace Church, Penndel, PA. You can watch the blessing on-line at www.olgparishpenndel.org.



*The Home Office
Will be Closed on
Good Friday, April 18th*

April Reflection

Alleluia! Praise God! For this Resurrection Day of Jesus Christ's return to new life after a horrible death. Can we imagine what the Apostles were asked to believe? With their lives in chaos, fearful, they went into lock down. How appropriate the Lord's first words, "Peace be with you. When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His side. The disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord" (Jn. 20: 19-20). Thus, the Lord's physical confirmation of His body in new glory. This is what our hymn, "Rejoice," "Radujte," asks us to celebrate.

In this new, mystical transformation, Jesus missions His disciples to "Go make disciples of all nations (Mt. 28:19); and "behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age" (or "end of ages.") (Mt. 28: 20).

This invisible presence was to be realized in the daily Consecration of the Eucharist. Here is the real Presence of the body, blood, soul and divinity of Jesus Christ as He desires to live among us. Jesus fulfilled this promise at the Last Supper. "Then He took the bread, said the blessing, broke it and gave it to them saying, "This is my Body, which will be given for you, do this in memory of Me!" And likewise, the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood which will be shed for you" (Lk. 22:19, 20). (North American Bible)

In this Easter season, having just reflected during Lent for forty days on Jesus's last supper, His passion, and His death, we are filled with Joy in Jesus! Let us celebrate for the next forty days – until the Ascensions of Jesus, the Lord's resurrected Presence in the Eucharist, because nothing is impossible for God.

Sister Maria Theresa Hronec, SS.C.M.

REJOICE! O CHRISTIANS

(English translation to fit Slovak melody)

1. Sing, rejoice, be glad, O Christians,
Let your hearts resound with joy!
Savior Christ from death has risen,
Alleluia is our song.
CHORUS: Praise the Father and the Son,
Holy Spirit with them one.
Alleluia, Alleluia,
Now rejoice, O sinful one.
2. Wipe your tears, O blessed Jesus,
And your face all stained with blood.
Let us see your wounds and bruises
Earning our eternal good.
3. Now rejoice, O blessed Virgin,
Your Son Jesus is alive.
You had mourned with pain profoundly,
Weeping when your Son had died.
4. Now exult, all holy angels!
Welcome your King royally.
Alleluia! Sing rejoicing,
Praise the spotless Lamb you see.
5. Now our faith has grown intensely.
We believe we, too, shall rise
With Christ Jesus, Lord and Savior.
We'll rejoice to win this prize.

RADUJTE SA, Ó KREŠŤANIA

1. Radujte sa, ó kresťania,
V srdciach vašich plesajte!
Z mŕtvych povstal náš Spasiteľ,
Aleluja spievajte.
SBOR: Chvála Otcu i Synu,
Tiež i Duchu Svätému.
Aleluja, aleluja,
Radosť tebe hriešnemu.
2. Utri slzy, ó Ježišu,
I Tvoju tvár krvavú.
Ukáž, ktorú si trápením
Kúpil preveľkú slávu.
3. Raduj sa, ó Panna svätá,
Máš Synáčka živého,
Ktorého si tak bolestne
Oplakala mŕtveho.
4. Veselte sa, ó anjeli!
Kráľa svojho vítajte,
Aleluja nevinnému
Baránku zaspievajte.
5. Už je nádej naša silná,
Že tiež niekedy vstaneme;
A že s Kristom, Spasiteľom
Radovať sa budeme.

LIGHT ONE CANDLE

Carlo Acutis Fostered Community

Garan Santicola for The Christophers

Carlo Acutis was "online to get people offline," says Tim Moriarty, director of the film "Roadmap to Reality: Carlo Acutis and Our Digital Age," opening in theaters nationwide April 27-29. In a webinar on technology and the Catholic faith held at the end of last year and sponsored by the National Eucharistic Revival, Moriarty called Acutis "a saint for our times...the saint we need."

With Acutis' canonization set for April 27 in Rome's Saint Peter's Square, the Italian millennial who died of leukemia in 2006 at just fifteen years of age points the way to the perspective we should have on technology because his example reminds us that we should not be subjugated or addicted to it but rather utilize it to accomplish some good in the world. Brett Robinson, associate professor of practice at Notre Dame's McGrath Institute, joined Moriarty as cohost of the technology and faith webinar and shared the insight that Catholics should always be asking the question about technology, "What will this do for my community?"

Robinson is an advocate of using technology to bring people together in person as much as possible, and he points to Acutis as a perfect example of someone who put technology to use for just that purpose. Through his still-existing website about Eucharistic miracles, Carlo Acutis has left behind a tool that continues to inspire people to rediscover the miracle of the Mass and come together in community to worship Christ.

Acutis' actions remind us that the miracle of the Eucharist is the perfect starting point for a way of life that fosters community, and Robinson has some important advice for cultivating habits to facilitate that way of life. Based on information gathered from his Notre Dame students, he's put together key pointers for keeping technology in its proper place. An advocate of slowing things down to detach from technology, Robinson advises getting outside to spend time in nature and prioritizing human connections in face-to-face encounters to foster robust conversation where we make a point of celebrating each other's interests rather than the showcase of achievements characteristic of social media.

In a piece written for the National Catholic Register on the National Eucharistic Revival's webinar on technology and the Catholic faith, Jonah McKeown highlights Robinson's call for Christians to utilize technology with an intentionality that helps contextualize our experiences so we can better understand the world around us, always pointing back to our basic need for connection to God and others. Distilling Robinson's diagnosis of the worst problems posed by technology, McKeown writes, "Because society has become so dependent on technology, many people believe there is no choice but to accept the 'collateral damage' of a teen mental health crisis driven by social media, the scourge of pornography, and a decay of public discourse online."

And it's here that Acutis' example looms so large because he points us back to the Eucharist as the source from which all peace and satisfaction in relationship flows and the source to heal the wounds formed by our modern technological crisis. It seems fitting, therefore, that his canonization should be set within our current Jubilee Year of Hope and on Divine Mercy Sunday, when we honor the exquisite grace of God's mercy that flows out of Christ's sacrifice and out of every Eucharistic sacrifice. By highlighting the power of that sacrifice, Carlo Acutis points us to the cure for what ails our society today and is most certainly a saint for our times.

Insights and Viewpoints

Father Edward Mazich, O.S.B.

On Easter Sunday we rejoice in the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead as we hear John the evangelist's account of the discovery of the empty tomb. Mary Magdalen is the first one there, and she brings back the stunning and as yet not understood news of the vacant tomb to the disciples. Peter and John then swing into action and run to the tomb to see for themselves, and John is said to have "believed" as the result of witnessing the burial cloths lying where the body of Jesus had been placed.

The gospel reading for today's mass ends at that point, however we know that the story of the resurrection continues. In fact, although Peter and John immediately "return home" after seeing the empty tomb, Mary remains and mourns the death of Jesus, whom she does not yet realize has been raised from the dead—she thinks his body has been taken away. The risen Lord himself then appears to Mary and while at first glance she does

not recognize him, she quickly comes to realize that Jesus has indeed risen from the dead and she runs to the rest of the disciples to proclaim the good news.

Mary's movement from confusion to peace and joy in the risen Lord is one that hopefully has taken place in our lives, perhaps in a very powerful and defining way. We are wise then to continue following Mary Magdalene as she goes forth from her encounter with the risen Jesus and enters fully into the life of the nascent Christian community. As noted already her first step after seeing the empty tomb was to share the news of her discovery with her fellow believers. She now shares her joy once more by returning to Jerusalem and announcing that she had seen and spoken with Jesus.

The gospel merges with the message of the earlier readings to remind us that this connection between believing and sharing the joy and hope that come

from our belief should be a natural part of our lives. In other words the mission is a fundamental and essential element of Christian belief! In his letters to the Colossians and the Corinthians (both are optional readings at mass today) St. Paul writes of how the event of the resurrection should do two things. First, it should transform us at the most basic level, rendering our lives meaningful by inviting us out of our old ways: "Do you not know that a little yeast leavens all the dough? Clear out the old yeast, so that you may become a fresh batch of dough" (1 Cor 5:6-7). Secondly, our faith in the resurrection should encourage us to strive for ever greater life together with God in Christ: "If then you were raised with Christ, seek what is above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Think of what is above, not of what is on earth" (Col 3:1-2). That striving for union with God through Christ naturally leads, as in Mary Magdalene's life, to our

spreading the good news to all who will hear us.

This sort of progression from newly-appropriated belief in Christ to rejoicing in the Lord to sharing that joy through the mission is exactly what we hear of in this Easter Sunday's first reading, taken from the Acts of the Apostles. There Peter is seen some years after his trip to the empty tomb, proclaiming the resurrection to Cornelius, a Roman centurion. Peter tells Cornelius: "We are witnesses of all that [Jesus] did both in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree. This man God raised on the third day..." (Acts 10:39-41). This Easter season let us put on the fidelity of Mary Magdalene and the humble conversion of Peter and resolve to believe anew in the risen Lord, to shape our lives around his message, and to share that good news with all whom we encounter—Alleluia!



The seven days that commemorate the events surrounding the passion, death, and resurrection of Jesus is known as Holy Week. One of the first people who used this term was Saint Athanasius (died 373). Saint Athanasius was a very strong supporter, teacher, and defender of the true divinity of Jesus at a time in the church's history when that truth was not held by a good number of Christians.

Holy Week begins on Palm Sunday. Palms in biblical times were a symbol of goodness and victory, a sign of respect to one who was held in high esteem. The palm branches we receive in church on Palm Sunday symbolize the victory over sin and death that Jesus won by his own death on the cross.

Ancient church tradition holds that no Mass is celebrated on Holy Thursday without a congregation. The only Mass texts in the Roman Missal for during the day on Holy Thursday is the Chrism Mass. The Mass of Chrism is celebrated by a bishop, normally the bishop of the diocese, with priests from the diocese as concelebrants. The presiding bishop blesses the Sacred Oils used for the celebration of the Sacraments: the Oil of the Sick, for the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick; the Oil of Catechumens, for the Sacrament of Baptism; and the Sacred Chrism, for the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Orders. The Oils are distributed to the priests after this Mass for them to take to their parishes. The bishop also leads all priests present in renewing their priestly promised made at their ordination.

Although several (arch)dioceses for pastoral reasons celebrate the Mass of Chrism on another day in Holy Week, the traditional day and time remains the morning of Holy Thursday.

The Mass of the Lord's Supper takes place on Holy Thursday evening. This Mass begins what is known as the Easter Triduum. The word triduum comes from the Latin for "three days." It is suggested to have as few consecrated hosts as possible in the tabernacle before this Mass begins. Sufficient hosts for the Mass of the Lord's Supper and the Good Friday liturgy ought to be prepared and consecrated on Holy Thursday.

The Sacred Oils blessed at the Mass of Chrism are presented either at the beginning of this Mass or during the Presentation of the Gifts, also known as the Offertory Procession. Bells are rung during the singing of the Gloria, after which they are silenced until the Easter Vigil. Also after the Gloria and up to the Easter Vigil, instruments may be played only to accompany singing. The playing of meditative instrumental musical selections pieces during the triduum is strongly discouraged.

An option observed in many locations during the Mass of the Lord's Supper is the Washing of Feet in commemoration of what Our Lord did the night before he died (John 13: 3-15). Those selected for the Mandatum (the term used for those to have their feet washed, from the Latin "command" or "mandate") ought to be a cross-section of the faithful. The recommended number of people for the Mandatum is 12, although it is not required to have 12.

The Mass of the Lord's Supper, along with the Funeral Mass, are the only Masses that do not conclude with a Final Blessing and Dismissal. Instead, following the Prayer after Communion, the priest carries a ciborium with the remaining hosts consecrated at this Mass in procession to a repository, usually in a place outside the sanctuary. Some churches remain open throughout the night for prayer and adoration, other churches close before midnight.

It is customary for the church to be open during the day on Good Friday for private prayer. Many parishes offer Morning Prayer and Daytime Prayer from the Liturgy of the Hours for their parishioners.

The Celebration of the Passion of the Lord begins usually at 3pm. The service consists of a Liturgy of the Word and Solemn Intercessions, Adoration of the Holy Cross, and the Distribution of Holy Communion. With the exception of Communion to the Dying (Viaticum), this is the only time a person can receive Holy Communion on Good Friday.

A collection is taken up during the service on Good Friday at all churches throughout the world to help defray the operating costs of the various shrines and churches in the Holy Land that were built centuries ago at the approximate locations where special events took place, e.g. Our Lord's Annunciation, Birth, Transfiguration, Death and Resurrection; the Wedding

Feast of Cana; Multiplication of Loaves and Fish; Peter's denial of Jesus. Franciscan friars are tasked with the responsibility of caring for these sacred places.

It is also a custom for parishes to offer devotional prayers on the evening of Good Friday, such as the Stations of the Cross or Devotions to the Divine Mercy.

According to ancient church tradition, sacraments are not celebrated on Holy Saturday. Holy Communion may be given only to the dying as Viaticum.

Slovaks and other people of Slavic heritage bring their baskets of traditional Easter foods to church on Holy Saturday for a blessing.

The Easter Triduum concludes with the beginning of the Easter Vigil in the Holy Night. This Mass is to begin after nightfall to fully symbolize the Light of Christ, Risen from the dead, shining in the darkness. This is the reason this Mass begins with all lights in the church turned off.

The Mass begins with the lighting and blessing of the fire and Easter Candle. The Exsultet, or Easter Hymn of Praise, is sung from the ambo (pulpit) by the deacon or priest. If neither is able, a cantor may sing it. An extended Liturgy of the Word follows. Seven readings from the Old Testament, each with its own proper Responsorial Psalm, can be proclaimed. The minimum number of readings is three; the reading from Exodus 14 always to be read.

During the singing of the Gloria the altar candles are lit and bells are rung. After the reading from Paul's Letter to the Romans, the Alleluia is sung for the first time since before Ash Wednesday. The reading of the Gospel and the Homily follow.

Next the Easter Water is blessed. If there are any catechumens, they are Baptized and Confirmed at this time. People baptized in other Christian denominations preparing to become Catholic are to make their Profession of Faith and be received into the Church at a time apart from the Easter Vigil. All the baptized, holding a candle lit from the flame from the Easter Candle, are led by the priest in renewing their Baptism Promises. The priest then sprinkles the people with the newly blessed water.

The newly Baptized and Confirmed present the hosts and wine in the Offertory Procession. Mass proceeds as usual. Upon reception of their First Holy Communion at this Mass, the newly Baptized and Confirmed become fully initiated into the Catholic Church.

The Easter Vigil of the Holy Night concludes with the deacon or priest singing the dismissal with the double alleluias.

*Submitted By
National Chaplain Fr. Thomas Nasta*

American Slovak Club

LENTEN FISH FRY

Perch, Walleye, Shrimp & Cod

2915 Broadway Ave, Lorain, OH

AmericanSlovakClub.com/Fish-Fry

Please call ahead for reservations for parties of six or more at 440-245-5146



Voted the BEST Fish Fry in NE Ohio!

Once Featured on a Travel Channel show with Andrew Zimmern

FISH FRY

Served Every Friday through Good Friday

4:30 - 7:00 pm

Reservations MUST be made by the Wednesday before the Friday dinner. Carry out prices vary.

Call 330-786-9972 for details.

SLOVAK J CLUB

485 MORGAN AVE • AKRON, OH

FCSU INTERNATIONAL BOWLING TOURNAMENT EVENTS AT-A-GLANCE

We're excited to welcome our bowlers and guests to Kent Lanes - 11th Frame. See you soon!

SATURDAY, APRIL 26TH

8:45-9:45am.....Registration & Breakfast
 10:00am.....Teams Event
 12:00-1:30pm.....Lunch Buffet & Raffles
 1:00-3:30pm.....Doubles Event
 4:30pm.....Vigil Mass "Erie Street"
 5:15pm.....Cocktail Hour "Terrace"
 6:15pm.....Dinner & Raffles "Dix Ballroom"

SUNDAY, APRIL 27TH

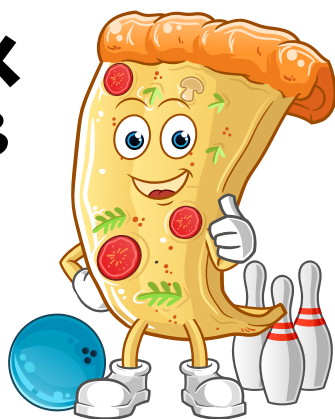
8:45-9:45am.....Registration & Breakfast
 10:00am-12:30 pm.....Singles Event & Raffles

EVENT CONTACTS

Joanne Fibbi.....412-953-4721
 Fraternal Activities Director
 Jay Fazek330-803-2834
 Tournament Manager
 Kent Lanes - 11th Frame330-673-1448
 1524 S. Water Street
 Kent State University Hotel330-346-0100
 215 S. Depeyster Street



SLOVAK J CLUB OPEN HOUSE



Friday, April 25

Join Us For a Food Open House for Early Arrival Tournament Bowlers.

Homemade pizza & hors d'oeuvres will be served.

Call 330-786-9972 with questions

485 MORGAN AVE • AKRON, OH

N·E·W·S from the Home Office

How to Register Online for Upcoming Events

We're excited to introduce a new feature on our website: the ability to register online for national events! Registration is now open for our National Picnics, including Knoebels on June 21st and Wiegand Lake Park on June 28th. The process is simple, but we've outlined detailed instructions to ensure everything goes smoothly.



STEP 1:

At the top of the website, in the dark blue box, you'll see the "Pay Now" button. Don't panic! Both picnics are FREE, but this button will direct you to the registration portal. On the right side, you'll find the event selection area.

STEP 2:

To register, click the down arrow to choose the event you wish to attend. Enter your first and last name, as well as the number of guests you'll be bringing. If you're registering just for yourself, enter "0" in the guest box. If you're bringing two guests, enter "2" for a total of three participants. Click the "Continue" button to move to the next screen

STEP 3:

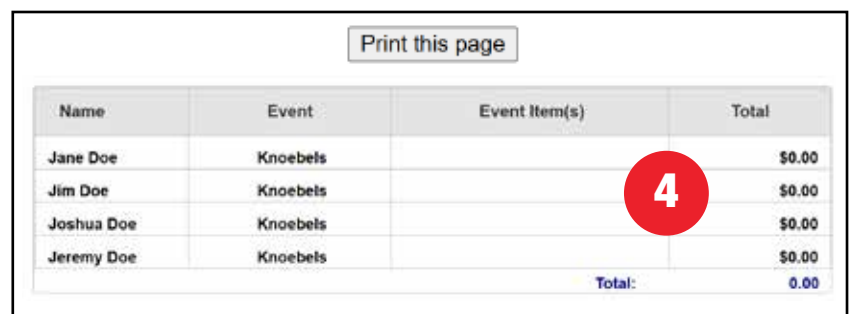
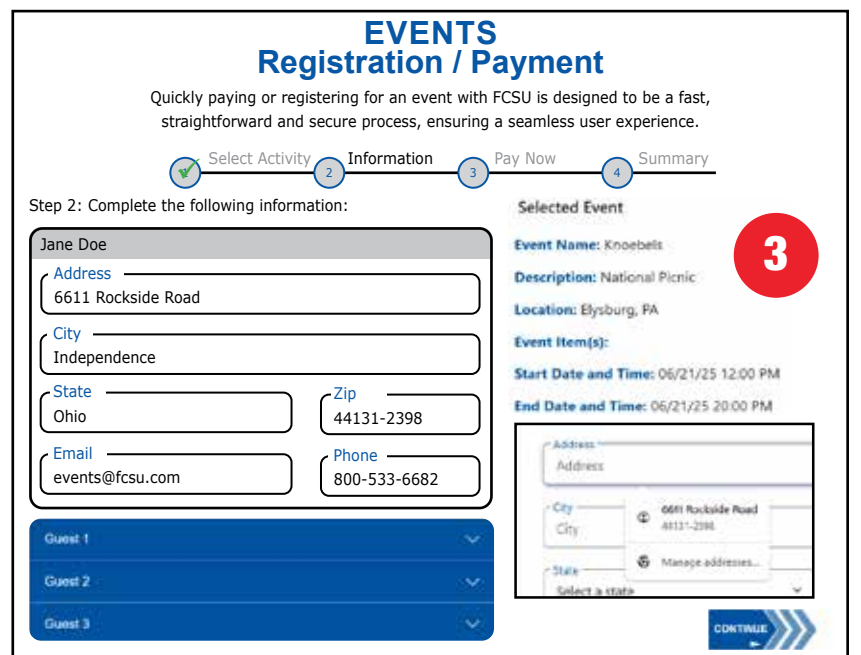
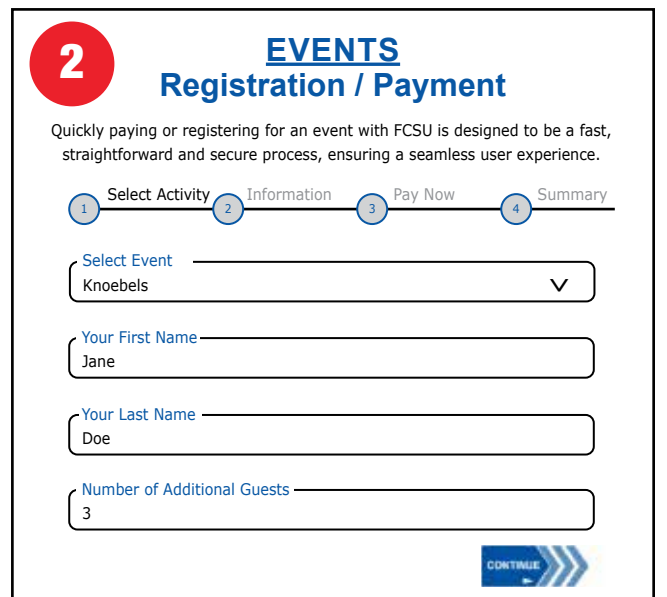
Next, complete the fields for each guest. To move to the next guest, click the down arrow to the right. If everyone shares the same address, their information will automatically populate when you hover over the field. This makes the process quicker if all attendees live at the same address. All fields are required. Once you've filled out the details for each guest, click "Continue."

STEP 4:

Finally, you'll see a summary of your registration. You will not get an email confirmation, but the summary page can be printed for your records. You're all set for the event. If you'd like to register for a different event, simply repeat the process and select a new event.

While we encourage you to register online, you are always welcome to call 800.533.6682, ext. 119 or email events@fcsu.com to make your reservations.

See page 17 for more information about our National Picnics at Knoebels and Wiegand Lake Park. We are excited for both events and can't wait to see you soon!



Online Event Registration for FREE Events

- 1 Hit the "Pay Now" Button on the top menu.
- 2 Provide your name and number of people attending the event.
- 3 Provide contact information for yourself and all guests.
- 4 View the registration summary.

Paid events will have slightly different instructions.

The Home Office Will be Closed on Monday, May 26 in honor of Memorial Day



N·E·W·S *from the Home Office*

We are excited to announce that our new website is now live! A tremendous amount of work was involved and we want to thank our Home Office staff and our outside vendors for an amazing job. If you have questions, don't hesitate to reach out.

Our New Website is LIVE! Check it Out!

Protecting Families. Planning Futures. Promoting Fellowship.

How can we help you?



Explore Our Products

Ensure your financial security and peace of mind for the future. Protect and provide for yourself and your loved ones with Life Insurance, Annuities, IRAs, ESAs and Estate Planning Insurance.

[DISCOVER MORE →](#)



Become an Agent

Join a trusted, stable brand with more than 130 years of experience. We offer excellent products, competitive commissions, agent support and productivity tools.

[LEARN MORE →](#)



Join Our Community

Join the First Catholic Slovak Union for access to valuable financial products, scholarships, fraternal events and cultural programs. Experience the strength of our community and legacy of faith, family and financial security.

[BECOME A MEMBER →](#)

Why FCSU Financial®?

FCSU helps you build wealth, plan for retirement, and ensure financial security for your loved ones with our insurance and investment products. With over 134 years of experience, FCSU is committed to offering tailored financial products that promote a sense of community and cultural heritage.

\$587M+

In assets & growing

\$55M+

Surplus & growing

5.00%

Annuity and IRA rates

\$202K+

Scholarships awarded

2024 FINANCIAL ANNUAL REPORT

As we reflect on the past year, I am pleased to share a comprehensive overview of our achievements and progress. The 2024 Annual Report will highlight the many accomplishments we have made as a Society, from operational improvements to growth initiatives, as well as our continued dedication to supporting our members and enhancing our services. Father Thomas Nasta and Members of the Board of Directors of the First Catholic Slovak Union of the United States of America and Canada, it is our pleasure to present this report to you.

Modestly successful operating results were experienced for the Society in the year 2024. There were low Operating profits continuing a long record of profits. The Society chose to restructure and modernize some operations which resulted in much lower premium income than prior years, especially annuities. Dividend payments to members of \$440,218 were consistent with prior years. Total asset value increased 1.5% (\$8,505,636) as reported on the Annual Statement. Due to the uncertain economic climate, mixed insurer results were expected. Realized capital gains were \$217,270 and unrealized capital gains were \$1,459,505. Liabilities increased \$7,511,876 (1.4%) mainly resulting again from the increase in the AVR, Post Retirement Benefit and a \$14,460,979 increase in Annuity Reserve. Surplus increased 1.9%.

TOTAL OPERATION GAIN AND CAPITAL GAINS(LOSSES) FOR 2024:

Line 31 of the Financial Statement.....	\$140,121
Realized Capital Gains	217,270
Line 31 of the Financial Statement.....	357,391

There were Deferred Capital Gains (IMR) of \$271,960. The surplus increase of 1.9% was partially due to the operating gain, and mainly due to change in unrealized capital gains. Total premium funds were used to purchase additional assets. Unrealized gains/(losses) were as follows:

(a) Common Stock (Unaffiliated)	\$ (189,291)
(b) Other Invested Assets	\$ 1,628,796
	\$1,439,505

The following additional items affected Surplus:

AVR Increase	\$ (643,148)
Change in Non-Admitted Assets	\$ (162,915)
Accrued/Asset Adjustment	\$ 2,931
2024 Surplus Increase	\$ 993,763
2024 Surplus	\$ 54,418,491

Insurance in force decreased \$5,273,000 in 2024 (This is smaller than the five-year decrease of \$9,930,000). Increasing Life insurance production remains a challenge and a priority for the future.

The Society investments emphasize Bonds (82.1%), Mortgages, and Other Invested Assets as its main investments. Other invested Assets include Hedge Funds, Strategy, and Situation Funds. The Society also purchases Preferred and Common Stocks.

As of December 31, 2024 the Society had \$28,308,938 of cash.

2024 Common Stocks value is \$1,744,773 (0.3% of assets).

The Society is a member of the Federal Home Loan Bank (FHLB) and has used funds available at very favorable interest rates to help generate investment income. The funds acquired through the FHLB are managed by an investment management company. During 2024, FHLB loans decreased to \$11,159,804.

Financial Position

Summary: Realized capital gains of \$217,270; plus, operating gains of \$140,121; plus, unrealized gains of \$1,439,504; less \$643,148 of AVR increase; increased surplus by \$993,763 (change in non-admitted assets and accrual adjustments were \$-159,984).

The Society's IMR now stands at \$370,171, and the AVR is at \$5,569,065. The common stock and real estate components of the AVR are at maximum. Overall, the AVR is at 93.5% of total maximum.

The Society's solvency ratio is 110.2%. When the IMR and AVR are combined with surplus, the solvency ratio is 111.45% (consistent with prior years).

The Society experienced total premium income that decreased 44.5% from the previous year. Annuity premium income was only 43.7% of the previous year. Investment income decreased .2%

Bonds are 82.1% (-2.1%) of the Society's assets, with an average maturity of 10.5 years. The Society enjoys excellent bond quality with 97.4% of the bonds in the two highest NAIC rating classes. Preferred Stocks make up 0.8% of invested assets, and Common stock 0.3%, which serve to provide diversity and balance to the portfolio, as well as to provide the benefit of growth potential in the market. Other assets consist of mortgages (9.9%); and all others (1.7%), including cash on hand of \$28,308,938. About 8.6% of the cash is in Government securities.

The most significant changes to liabilities were: policy reserves increased 3.14%; Deposit type accounts decreased 35.1% (lower FHLB loans), IMR decreased 21.6%; Funds held as Trustee increased .2%. The AVR increased 13.1% partially due to the Unrealized Gains and investment purchases. The AVR is 93.5% of the 2024 maximum. Average lapse ratio is very favorable for the past 5 years. The Society enjoys loyal membership.

The Society's total admitted assets are \$587,455,963, a 1.5% increase despite the smaller premium income production, and due to lower annuity benefits. Five-year asset growth is \$129,807,486 or 28.4%.

Operations

Life premium income decreased 4.4%, despite a 9.8% increase in Single Premium. Renewal life premium was lower by 12.9%. Annuity premium income decreased 56.3% and totaled \$37,374,411 versus \$85,468,457. Overall total premium income decreased 55.5%. Sales activity consists of contracted General Agencies, Independent Agents, and Member Agents. The Society had changes in the marketing area and will regroup. Investment income was 0.2% lower, consistent with the overall lower premium income, level investment income and the 2024 mixed economic climate. Total income for the year was 42.5% lower.

Total member benefits were 54.3% lower primarily because of a 56.1% decrease in annuity benefits paid. There was a 77.1% decrease in interest paid; 1.6% decrease in Death benefits. Life reserve demand was 58.1% higher, and annuity reserve demand was \$9,261,995 (178.2%) higher, consistent with the lower annuity premium production and benefit activity, plus the lower CARVM allowance. Total Operation Expenses were 7.8% lower. Commissions were 41.5% lower, reflecting the decrease in annuity premium production. General Expenses were a modest 6.7% higher. Management continues to monitor expenses, and expense levels in relation to income. Dividends to members were \$440,182 which is slightly higher than the prior year. The Society realized a gain from operations of \$140,121, after payment of dividends which is consistent with lower premiums, etc.

Net Income was \$357,391. The AVR increased by \$643,148, primarily due to asset growth.

There are no known trends which will cause future operation results to deviate materially.

Cash Flow and Liquidity

The items which provide liquidity are \$28,308,938 of cash, \$1,744,773 of common stock, \$31,285,205 of

Since 2009, the Society has employed the services of AQS (a fraternal benefit society experienced investment management firm) to assist in guiding its investment activity. There are no known items which would cause the financial results to be inaccurate.

FINANCIAL POSITION:

2024 Premium Income:

Life Insurance.....	\$ 1,286,349
Annuities	37,374,411

Total Premium Income\$ 38,660,760

2024 Investment Income:

Government Bonds	\$ 215,836
Bonds	22,753,873
Preferred Stock	276,633
Common Stocks	
Un-Affiliates	120,989
Mortgage Loans	4,000,040
Real Estate	306,778
Certificate Loans	71,234
Short Term Investments	939,705

Total Investment Income\$28,685,088

Investment Expenses:

Depreciation on Real Estate and Other Investment Expenses (Investment Taxes, License Fees, etc.).....	\$ (2,461,203)
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Net Premium and Investment Income \$64,884,645

bonds maturing in less than one year; over \$38,000,000 of premium income; and over \$26,000,000 of investment income. Expected outgo for benefit payments, commissions, dividends and expenses are about \$49,719,009, if the same amount of withdrawals are incurred in 2025. The Society enjoyed \$16,488,798 of positive operation cash flow in 2024.

The Society experienced lower operating profits, which is consistent with the large premium decrease and lower CARVM relief. Asset growth in 2024 was favorable. The net investment rate of return, although somewhat affected by the fluctuating interest rates available in 2024, will be at a higher level. The Society markets no other major interest sensitive products other than annuities.

There are no plans for any major expenses or outlays.

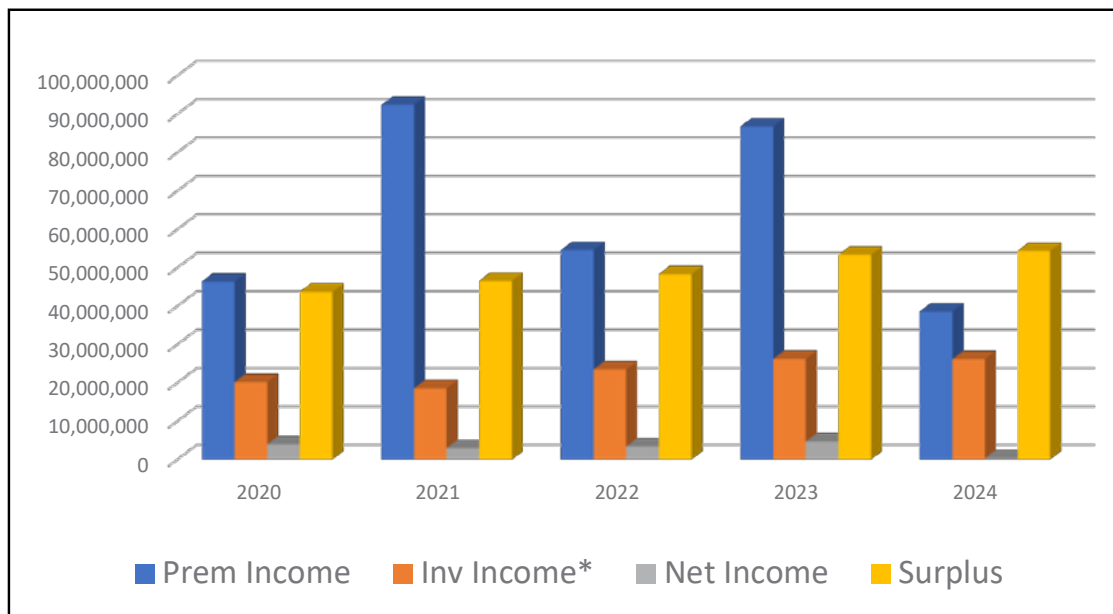
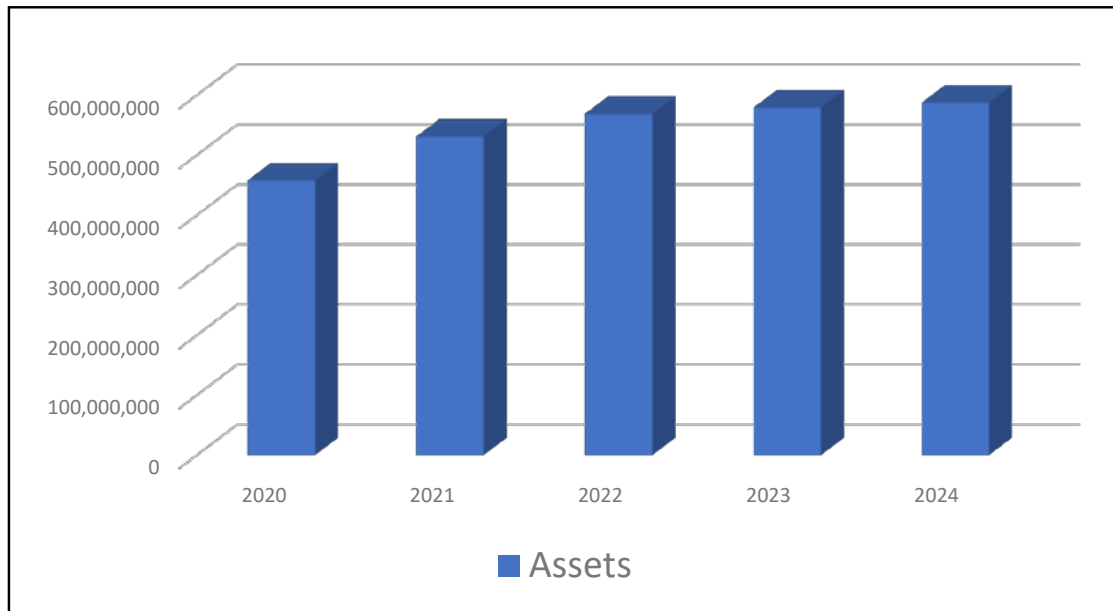
Risk Based Capital

The Risk Based Capital calculations indicate

Listed Below is a Five-Year Comparison of Assets, Premium Income, Investment Income, Net Income and Surplus

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Assets	457,648,477	530,937,088	568,716,615	579,134,399	587,455,963
Premium Income	46,423,786	92,488,251	54,622,568	86,814,655	38,660,760
Investment Income*	20,225,043	18,621,567	23,556,485	26,274,799	26,223,885
Net Income	4,001,829	3,022,244	3,473,008	4,729,876	357,391
Surplus	43,771,595	46,657,607	48,374,546	53,424,728	54,418,491

*This includes a one-time dividend of \$3,602,388 from Jednota holding company in 2020.



that total adjusted capital is \$60,187,556. This does not include the \$370,171 in the IMR. The total for 50% of the calculated RBC was \$9,162,438. The RBC ratio was affected by the inclusion of new bond calculation factors introduced in 2021 into the RBC calculation.

The Society had two Insurance Regulatory Information System ratios outside NAIC designated ranges; change in premium and change in reserving. The items have been covered in this report.

Total security trading activity was \$126,169,626 (+\$51,172,520) in 2024 (higher than 2023 activity due to the 2024 economy).

Insurance in Force

The Society recorded a decrease of \$5,273,000 of insurance in-force. Insurance in-force has decreased 3.1% since 2020.

Annuities

FCSU's insurance and annuity portfolio contains many products, which suit all insurance and annuity needs. The Membership and Marketing Team, along with our actuarial firm, Miller & Newberg Inc., and our Financial Consulting Firm, ENDePersis Fraternal Consulting, LLC, continues to explore avenues to improve and enhance our existing products and develop new products.

Insurance Rates & Rules

New insurance premium rates and application forms have been created to align with the updated mortality table used in developing our insurance products. The updated 2025 Commissioners Standard Ordinary (CSO) Table, adopted by the National Association of Insurance Commissioners (NAIC), has been in effect starting January 1, 2025. Additionally, in 2021, the NAIC required us to update all our annuity suitability applications to ensure compliance with the states in which we are licensed. Our current applications have not yet been updated with our new logo. Additional approval steps are required before implementing our new name and logo on these documents. We are working through the necessary procedures and will make the updates as soon as we have the final approvals. The new annuity applications are now available on our website at www.fcsu.com.

FCSU, like other fraternal benefit societies and insurers, is required by the states in which it operates to comply with the changes adopted by the NAIC. Since the 1940s, the insurance industry has been regulated by state laws to protect policyholders. These regulations are designed to ensure that insurance rates are not excessive, while also preventing rates from being set too low, which could lead to insurer insolvency and an inability to meet financial obligations to

Financial Summary

Our 2024 quarterly and year-end financial statements were compiled and completed on a timely basis and filed with the various states in which we are licensed to do business. We are continually in contact with the regulatory agencies of the various states regarding their requirements, which are constantly changing. We are in compliance with all of the states' and NAIC accounting regulations.

In 2024, our insurance membership declined by 1,232 members, attributed to death claims, cash withdrawals, and expulsions, compared to a decline of 1,002 members in 2023. Furthermore, the number of life insurance certificates issued fell by 1,090 in 2024, whereas the decrease in 2023 was 1,285 certificates.

As of December 31, 2024, annuitant membership totaled 5,455 members, reflecting consistent growth and stability. In 2024, FCSU Financial welcomed 512 new members and experienced a loss of 316 members, resulting in a net gain compared to the previous year. The Christmas Special project was successful, issuing 358 new policies during the holiday campaign and introducing additional members to our society. This initiative further strengthened our community and demonstrated our commitment to expansion and member engagement.

At the close of 2024, the society held 7,838 annuity certificates, with a total annuity account cash value of \$413,575,006 representing a 3.71% increase from \$398,773,557 in 2023. Over the past five years, the cash value of annuity accounts has grown by an impressive 50.86%. In comparison, total assets stood at \$139,434,570 in 2020, highlighting the society's sustained financial growth and strong asset management.

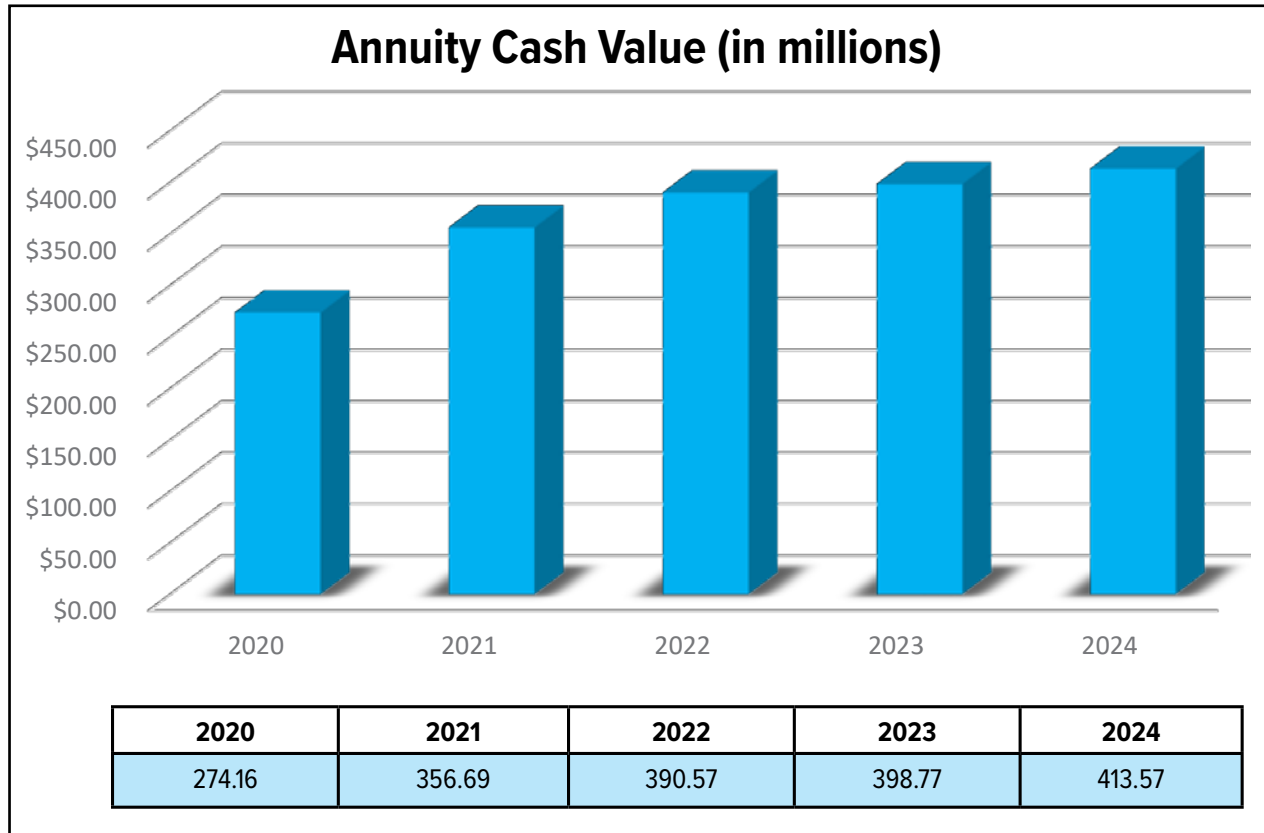
policyholders. Insurance regulations help prevent unfair discrimination against policyholders based on factors unrelated to the risks being insured.

Our experienced Home Office staff is ready to assist with any questions regarding rates, application completion, or our insurance and annuity products. To enhance member service and improve efficiency, we offer an automatic premium payment service, allowing members to have their premiums automatically deducted from their bank accounts. Additionally, annuity holders can take advantage of automatic deposit for their annuity checks. For added convenience, they can pay or deposit only.

Effective April 1, 2020, in accordance with state regulations, to receive a commission, you must be a licensed agent or a Fraternal licensed agent. Non-agents will receive a \$25 referral fee for each referral after the insurance policy is issued, provided that underwriting is complete and the first-year premium has been paid. This referral fee applies to the following policies: Whole Life or Single Premium Whole Life policies with a face amount of \$5,000 or more, and Term policies with a minimum of \$25,000 or more (JEP policy \$25,000 or more).

The \$25 referral fee will be paid for each annuity policy once underwriting is complete and the policy has been issued. The referral fee applies to annuity policies with a deposit of \$2,000 or more.

In 2024, we continued to encourage our current members to obtain their state insurance license. Typically, obtaining a full insurance license requires passing an exam and completing continuing education classes to maintain the license. A full license allows a person to solicit any amount of insurance or annuity products without restrictions. In some



states, individuals may apply for a restricted fraternal license, which does not require an exam or continuing education classes, but it limits the types and amounts of insurance or annuity products that can be sold.

To support this initiative, we are offering an incentive plan for any member interested in becoming a state-licensed insurance agent. The FCSU will cover 50% of the cost to obtain a life insurance/annuity license in their state, including the cost of required courses and the license fee (which varies by state). Additionally, based on productivity, the FCSU will cover 50% of the renewal cost. If you are interested in becoming a licensed agent in your state, please contact the Home Office for more information.

Audit

We are currently undergoing an audit with the Ohio Department of Insurance. As required every five years, it includes a thorough review of several key areas, such as our IT system, cybersecurity measures, and in-house procedures. While the audit is still in progress, I am pleased to report that, overall, things are in great shape. We have been working closely with the auditors to ensure all aspects of our operations meet the necessary standards, and we are confident that our systems and procedures will continue to hold up under review. In 2024, our external auditors, Hosack, Specht, Muetzel & Wood, conducted a remote audit, which included a thorough review of our quarterly and year-end financial statements for the period ending December 31, 2023, as well as our Home Office operations. As a result of their findings, our Society received an excellent review. Additionally, our internal auditors conducted several audits throughout 2024 and confirmed that everything was in order. We have already scheduled additional audits for 2025.

Branch Requirements

The Home office will continue to merge inactive branches with active branches. This is an ongoing procedure since many of our branch officers are unable to continue to service the members in their branches. Regional Directors are encouraged to contact the branches in their region. The information we obtain will be used to find out how we can better serve our branches.

Per FCSU bylaws, branches are still required to meet the requirements set forth by our FCSU Convention to qualify for the branch stipend. We encourage our branch officers that if they are unable to perform their duties and cannot find anyone in their branches to take over their duties, to call the Home Office. We will try to merge them with an active branch.

For those branches that do not wish to merge, the Home Office can offer you guidelines as to how you can meet the requirements and receive the stipend. The requirements for the financial obligations (bylaw section 4.05) has been mailed to all branch officers and published in the Jednota newspaper as a reminder of the expectations for each branch. The Board of Directors strongly recommended that branches hold in person or virtual meetings to help increase attendance. A virtual meeting will count as a meeting towards the branch stipend.

Prepared by:
Ken Arendt, President, CEO
Kevin Collins, Executive Secretary, COO

FCSU Scholarship Program

We offer more than 130 scholarships for our members, covering grade school through graduate school and even vocational or technical schools.

Awarded by both the Home Office and individual branches, these scholarships range from \$500 to \$4000. On average, FCSU awards more than \$202K+ each year.

FCSU Scholarship

Catholic Grade School (grades 5-8)	\$500
Catholic High School	\$1,000
Colleges	\$1,500
Graduate School	\$1,500
Vocational/Trade School	\$1,000

The Jednota Benevolent Foundation

This is separate from the Society's scholarship program and is available to any person pursuing post-secondary education. To be eligible for this one-time scholarship, the applicant must be of Slovak descent and Catholic faith. In 2024, ten non-renewable scholarships in the amount of \$500.00 each were awarded.

Stephen C. Matula Scholarship

In 2024, fifteen \$4,000 scholarships were awarded to applicants of Slovak heritage.

**2024 ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE PRESIDENT, CEO
A New Year, A New Look**

REBRANDING – A New Website, Form Updates and A Jednota Facelift

I am pleased to update you on our successful rebranding initiative that took place over the past year. As part of our ongoing efforts to evolve and attract new members while preserving our rich heritage, we have officially begun doing business as FCSU Financial®. This change allows us to modernize our image and appeal to a broader audience, while still honoring our deep Slovak roots. We are now exclusively using our new brand identity, including the updated logo and colors, on all new marketing and promotional materials.

I am excited to share that we launched our new website! This updated platform offers great flexibility for sharing information with our members and the public. It has been designed with improved functionality to make it easy for branch and district members to access their information. Events and scholarship opportunities are visible and easy to navigate, ensuring our members stay informed and engaged. Additionally, we have made our products clearly defined and accessible, providing a seamless experience for both current and prospective members.

Another key improvement is the introduction of the payment processing system, which allows guests to sign in and deposit funds for a member. For example, a grandparent can now conveniently add funds to their grandchild's educational accounts with just a few clicks. We made sure to stay up to date with cybersecurity regulations and have incorporated several new safety features aimed at better protecting our members' personal and financial information.

As part of this process is the redesign and streamlining of many of our most frequently used forms. Our goal with these updates is to make the forms more user-friendly for our members, while also ensuring that our staff can easily gather all the necessary information to complete transactions and requests efficiently. To enhance accessibility and ease of use, all of the updated forms are now available as fillable .pdfs. Members can download the forms and fill them out electronically. They can easily save and have access to all of the documents they have mailed to us.

We have updated our Facebook page and many of our promotional and marketing materials. While we are excited about the progress we've made, we remain committed to staying true to our heritage, ensuring that our history and values continue to shine through.

As part of our ongoing rebranding efforts, *Jednota* has received a fresh facelift. The newspaper features a new masthead that aligns with our updated brand identity, while the feature pages remain consistent to ensure a cohesive look each month. Deadlines for submissions are posted both online and within the newspaper. *Jednota* continues to serve as an important tool to promote our products, share vital information from both the Home Office and branch/district updates, and provide engaging articles of interest for our members. We have an online archive of all *Jednota* newspapers, dating back to 2006. To be considered for publication, all articles should be sent to the Home Office or they may be emailed to our Editor at editor@fcsu.com.

Our digital newsletter's template has also been updated to reflect our new name and logo. It is emailed each month to our subscribers. It includes important deadline reminders, developments since the newspaper was mailed and articles of most interest.

Advertising

As part of our strategy to raise brand awareness and expand our reach, we have partnered with Fox 8 in Cleveland, where we are running daily commercials. We have taped several sessions on Good Day Cleveland sharing valuable product information and insights with their audience. These guest spots are available for viewing on our website, offering ongoing exposure.

In addition to our collaboration with Fox 8, we have placed an ad at the Cleveland Airport, ensuring visibility for both travelers and locals alike. We are also reaching out to the Slovak community through advertisements on two Slovak radio stations—one in Cleveland and the other in Pittsburgh. These initiatives are part of our ongoing effort to connect with a wider audience and increase engagement with both current and potential members.

Staff Restructuring

We have recently completed a restructuring of our staff to ensure clearer job responsibilities and a more streamlined approach to our operations. With this change, our departments are now more specialized, allowing us to operate more efficiently and effectively.

To further improve communication and transparency, a directory of employee names, contact information, and their respective areas of responsibility has been made available on our new website and will also be published in Jednota regularly. This will ensure that both our members and internal teams have easy access to the right contacts and resources as needed.

Cybersecurity

As part of our ongoing commitment to enhancing our cybersecurity, we have implemented several new measures to better protect our members' personal information. In addition to upgrading our security protocols, we have attended various webinars and industry seminars to stay informed about the latest trends and best practices in cybersecurity. These efforts have been crucial in ensuring we are prepared to address emerging threats in a rapidly evolving digital landscape.

In addition to our internal efforts, we are working with an outside cybersecurity firm and collaborating with our software team to further strengthen our defenses. By combining external expertise with our internal resources, we are taking every precaution necessary to make our systems as secure as possible. These improvements will not only protect sensitive data but also help foster greater trust and peace of mind for our members, knowing that we are actively working to keep their information safe.

Furthermore, we keep providing comprehensive training for our staff to ensure they are well-equipped to identify potential security risks and follow best practices in data protection. By educating our team on the importance of cybersecurity and how to effectively mitigate risks, we are reinforcing a culture of vigilance and responsibility. These combined efforts will help us safeguard both our members' information and the integrity of our operations.

Connecting With Our Heritage

I am pleased to share that we are reestablishing our relationship with the Slovak Embassy in Washington, D.C. This renewed connection is an important step in our efforts to stay more informed about developments in Slovakia. As part of this collaboration, we are excited to announce that a representative from the Embassy will be visiting our Home Office in April 2025. This visit will provide an excellent opportunity for us to strengthen our ties, discuss potential initiatives, and explore ways we can assist each other moving forward.

The University of Pittsburgh is the only university in the United States where students can take Slovak

language and culture classes. The FCSU has a long history of involvement with the program, having been instrumental in funding the first Slovak chair and encouraging the department's development from its inception. This partnership is a meaningful step in strengthening our ties to Slovak heritage and culture, and we are proud to continue supporting this unique and important program.

In an effort to preserve and honor our 135-year history, I am pleased to announce that we have worked closely with PhD Martin Javor, professor of history at the Prešov University, Slovakia. He wrote *Jednota*, a book that captures the first 55 years of our organization's history, spanning from 1890 to 1945. It offers a rich collection of historical accounts, photographs, and memories that showcase the significant milestones and the Slovak people who immigrated to North America and shaped our history.

Currently, the *Jednota* book is available in Slovak, and we are working on plans to have it translated into English to ensure it reaches a broader audience. This project not only helps keep our legacy alive but also serves as an important resource for future generations to understand and appreciate the foundations of our organization.

As your President, I have had the honor of representing the FCSU on the Board of Directors for both the Slovak Catholic Federation and the Slovak League. I have attended and represented our Society at fraternal events within the FCSU and other fraternal organizations. Throughout the year, I also participate in various branch and district meetings. Additionally, I attend numerous seminars, including the American Fraternal Alliance Seminar, the AQS Symposium, and the ENDePersis Fraternal Consulting Seminars. These events provide valuable insights into current insurance trends and potential state and NAIC regulations that may impact the FCSU. I maintain ongoing communication with state Departments of Insurance to ensure that the FCSU consistently meets all state regulations, and we continue to exceed these requirements.

My wife, Theresa, and I sincerely appreciate your trust and support during my time as President. I remain committed to working diligently on behalf of our Society, striving to build a stronger organization while addressing all matters with honesty and integrity. We are the First Catholic Slovak Union, and I pray for the continued growth of our Society. With our exceptional products and competitive rates, it's essential that we all actively engage in recruiting new members and promoting our Society.

In closing, I would like to express my gratitude to all my fellow officers and board members who have supported me throughout the year. A special thank you goes to our highly skilled Home Office staff for their dedication and hard work.

Ďakujem,
Ken Arendt

The Economic Success of Our Society Depends on Four Key Factors:

- Effectively selling and promoting our insurance and annuity products to boost premium income

- Managing our investment portfolio to increase investment returns

- Controlling our operating expenses

- Exploring new ways to attract new members

The addition of new members is essential to our continued growth.

Office Remodel and Museum Update

We've had a successful completion of our office remodel, the first such update since 1988. The new design features a modern, more spacious space that creates a better and more welcoming environment for our staff. This improvement enhances both functionality and comfort, allowing our team to work more efficiently while fostering a positive atmosphere.

The remodel also allowed us to expand the Slovak Heritage Museum, a vital part of our mission to preserve and promote Slovak culture. This expansion has enhanced the museum's accessibility and exhibition areas, providing a more engaging experience for visitors. In addition, all of the museum's valuable artifacts have been meticulously cataloged and photographed, ensuring that we maintain a comprehensive record for future generations. Furthermore, we continue to be fortunate in receiving generous donations to the museum. These contributions help us further enrich the collection and support ongoing preservation efforts.

11 New States and New Agent Campaigns

We are now fully licensed in 11 new states, bringing our total to 38. The new states are Alaska, Arkansas, Delaware, Idaho, Kansas, Maine, New Hampshire, Oklahoma, Rhode Island, Utah and Vermont. This expansion is a significant milestone in our efforts to grow our presence and reach more members across the country. We are optimistic about the opportunities that this growth presents, and we believe it will play a pivotal role in increasing our market share and strengthening our overall position in the industry.

Our team is committed to continuing these efforts by working closely with other states to secure additional licenses and ensure we can continue to expand our reach.

We currently have over 470 agents, and we are actively working to expand our network. We have developed targeted independent agent campaigns designed to reach a broader audience and effectively recruit new talent. These campaigns are strategically tailored to highlight the benefits of partnering with our organization and to demonstrate the value we offer to independent agents. Our agents have access to our agent portal which allows them to view their client's accounts online. Agents receive monthly emails on our annuity rates and insurance products.

In 2024, We Added 11 New States We Are Now Licensed in 38 States:

Alaska	Kentucky	North Carolina
Arkansas	Maine	Ohio
Arizona	Maryland	Oklahoma
Colorado	Massachusetts	Pennsylvania
Connecticut	Michigan	Rhode Island
Delaware	Minnesota	South Carolina
Florida	Missouri	Tennessee
Georgia	Nebraska	Texas
Idaho	Nevada	Utah
Illinois	New Hampshire	West Virginia
Indiana	New Jersey	Vermont
Iowa	New York	Virginia
Kansas		Wisconsin

2024 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY, COO

Father Thomas Nasta, Mr. President and Members of the Board of Directors, it is my pleasure to present my 2024 Annual Report.

Home Office Staff

I would like to thank the Home Office staff who went above and beyond this year. They truly care for our Society and are dedicated to help serve our Members with anything they need. The Home Office welcomed several new staff members to the team to help advance our goals. We have shifted some roles and responsibilities of our staff and they have all risen to the challenge.

We are having monthly team meetings for training and to discuss current and future projects.

Rebranding

One of our large projects this year was our rebranding. All stationary, forms, promotional materials and our website were rebranded. This was an important task and everyone stepped up to provide information to ensure accuracy for their departments.

Gift Shop

We developed a gift shop where members can purchase FCSU logo wear. It has been integrated into the new website seamlessly. All profits will be used to help the scholarship fund.

Advertising

We continue to work with our local television station Fox 8. We are the Fox Financial Sponsor and our contract includes one interview per week during their "New Day Cleveland" segment, 30-second commercials airing during their news hours and streaming of our commercials in their app and on Facebook. We have discussed expanding our commercials into different markets utilizing their sister companies.

Some results include 12,394,245 on-line impressions and 687 commercials aired. Recently, we had two Slovak non-members stop in the office because of seeing an ad on television. They donated items for the museum. We gave them sales materials and will follow up soon.

Developing Branch and Agent Relationships

We are heavily working on recruiting new agents to bring in new members. Our goal is to turn new members into active fraternal members. We are developing a strategy to introduce these new members to branches.

We are sensitive to agent's commission and are working on a policy to grandfather agents into any future commission if this member buys a product through the branches or home office.

Agent Licensing Project

We worked with our software provider, PinPoint, to create coding to give an alert if an Agent or Fraternal Agent was no longer licensed or up to date on requirements. The screen will freeze and not allow a policy to be issued. We follow up with agents to get their licenses reinstated.

For those in Pennsylvania, we apologize for any issues you might had trying to get your license up to date. FCSU has to stay in compliance with PA state laws, which requires every Fraternal Agent to have current credentials.

Monthly Newspaper Contests

We started including Search-A-Word puzzle contests in the monthly newspaper. The members have responded positively and we routinely receive 200 or more entries. The benefits of these puzzles include:

- Gathering updated information for members such as email and correct addresses.
- Generating contact with non-members who fill out the form by sending them our monthly digital newsletter.

Travel and Fraternal Representation

- I had the opportunity to attend conferences with other fraternal organizations to strengthen our partnership with other organizations.
- Attended the Slovak Pro event in New York City where I met Slovak president, Peter Pellegrini.
- Made two trips to the Czech-Slovak Museum in Iowa where I met with Dr. Cecila Rokuskek, President, CEO of the museum to establish a working relationship. President of the Slovak Institute, Milan Kobulsky accompanied me on one trip.
- Elected to the FFMA Board of Directors.
- American Fraternal Alliance Conferences.

Current and Upcoming Projects

- Slovak Pro is a networking group for Young Slovak Professionals. We want to get more involved in their organization and encourage them to have outlets in the Cleveland and Pittsburgh area. This would help our members network with other Slovaks and help draw younger members into the Society.
- Talking with a Florida company with access to 5,000 independent agents across the country. We are working with them to recruit new agents.
- Working with a Philadelphia school district to promote our scholarship program.
- Starting once a month zoom calls for agents to discuss marketing campaigns, commission structures and sales incentives. We will also brainstorm their ideas on how to better market our products.
- Starting once a month zoom calls for branches and districts to go over success stories, challenges and answer questions.

Remodeling Project

The office underwent a complete remodel that finished in early 2024. We are all pleased with the results as it fosters a professional work environment for our staff and guests who visit.

TV monitors were purchased during the course of the remodel. They are used in the board room for training purposes and zoom meetings. The President and Executive Secretary also have TV monitors so they can stay updated on current events, financial markets, bonds and treasury data.

Reports and Tracking

- Developed Economic Review per Region Report. The information includes:
 - ▶ \$ per region
 - ▶ \$ per insurance/region
 - ▶ \$ per annuities/region
 - ▶ Members per region
 - ▶ Members by annuities
 - ▶ Members by insurance
- Developed a daily tracking form for the annuity department of money coming in versus what is going out.
- Developed a daily tracking form for death claims on money in the process of going out and status of claim process.
- Developed a phone tracking form to gauge success from marketing campaigns.
- Developed a weekly tracking form for the insurance department to determine the type of insurance product sold and how the client heard about FCSU. Was it sold by an agent, a branch or through our marketing campaign?
- Developed a monthly form provided to Regional Directors that include important updates at the Home Office. Talking points come from the President and Executive Secretary. It can be found on the portal and Regional Director's are encouraged to share the information at branch and district meetings.



To view the Board of Directors Reports, go to:
fcsu.com/about/newsroom

FIRST CATHOLIC SLOVAK UNION	
BALANCE SHEET AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2024	
ASSETS	
Bonds	\$477,295,838
Preferred Stock	4,750,000
Common Stock	1,744,773
Mortgage loans on real estate	57,486,069
Property Plant & Equipment	635,920
Cash	28,308,938
Certificate Loans	1,268,020
Other Invested Assets	10,063,973
Investment Income Due & Accrued	5,803,579
Uncollected premiums in course of collection	98,853
Total Assets	\$587,455,963
LIABILITIES	
Life & Annuity Reserves	501,785,847
Liability for deposit type contracts	16,274,734
Death claims payable	300,000
Provision for dividend payable	400,000
Interest maintenance reserve (IMR)	370,171
Asset valuation reserve (AVR)	5,569,065
Accrual for future convention costs	600,000
Post retirement reserve	769,082
Amounts retained as trustee	6,515,065
Other liabilities	453,508
Total Liabilities	\$533,037,472
Surplus	54,418,491
Total Liabilities and Surplus Funds	\$587,455,963

FIRST CATHOLIC SLOVAK UNION	
INCOME STATEMENT AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2024	
INCOME	
Insurance & Annuity Premiums	\$38,660,760
Net Investment Income	26,223,885
Amortization of Interest Maintenance Reserve	373,918
Miscellaneous Income	6,062
Total Income	\$65,264,625
EXPENSES	
Death Benefits	2,816,458
Annuity Benefits	40,903,642
Surrender Benefits	602,909
Interest on deposit-type contracts	114,020.00
Increase in reserves - Life & Annuity contracts	15,264,447
Commissions paid on new contracts	1,113,098
General Insurance & fraternal expenses	3,696,905
Insurance taxes, state licenses & fees	172,808
Total expenses	64,684,286
Net Gain from operations before dividends	580,339
Dividends paid to policyholders	440,218
Net Gain from operations after dividends	140,121
Net Realized Capital Gains (Losses)	217,270
Net Income (Loss)	357,391
CAPITAL AND SURPLUS ACCOUNT	
Capital & surplus, Dec. 31st, prior year	53,424,728
Net Income current year	357,391
Change in unrealized capital gain (loss)	1,439,504
Change in non admitted assets	- 162,915
Change in asset valuation reserve	- 643,148
Other gains & losses in surplus	2,931
Net change in capital & surplus current year	993,763
Capital & surplus, Dec. 31st, current year	54,418,491

Msgr Andrew Hlinka District 12 5th Annual Picnic

Sunday, June 1, 2025

1:00 - 4:00pm
Cedar Creek Park
453 Evergreen Drive
Belle Vernon, PA

The Hlinka District invites all Branch 320, 670 and 853 members to enjoy an afternoon with their fraternal brothers and sisters.

RSVP by Wednesday, May 28th
To RSVP or for more details, call 412-341-1577
or email Hlinkadistrictsecretary@gmail.com



District 12 Members are FREE

Non-Members are welcome for \$20 each

The Somerset Patriots Welcome District 4 (NJ) & District 16 (NYC)



FCSU FINANCIAL® BALLPARK BBQ EVENT

Sunday, July 13, 2025 @ 12pm

TD Bank Ballpark
860 E Main Street
Bridgewater, NJ

Sunday, July 13th
Gates open at 12pm
First Pitch is 1:05pm

Members are FREE
Guests cost \$38* each

RSVP to Jo Anne Peppe @ gsmgjap@aol.com
no later than Friday, June 20th.
Send her an email to coordinate guest payments.



Guests will have access to the Ballpark BBQ, with a 90 minute Buffet, Cash Bar and designated picnic style seating.

Buffet runs from 12pm-1:30pm

District 4 and 16 FCSU members from NJ and NY, join us at Somerset Patriots Baseball game and BBQ on Sunday, July 13th. Tickets are free for members of District 4 and 16; all others are \$38 per person/child. RSVP required. For details, contact Jo Anne Peppe at gsmgjap@aol.com by June 20th. Local Branches are encouraged to participate in this fun event!

BRANCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

All new BRANCH Announcements should be sent to branch@fcsu.com

FROM THE DESK OF THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY, COO

As of February 15, 2025, the following branches did not meet all of the qualifications for their 2024 Branch Stipend per Bylaw 4.05 Financial Obligation and per Bylaw 14.01 rules governing local branches.

003P	108K	293K	517K	735K
004K	122K	321P	543K	780K
007K	132K	330K	571K	796K
075K	157K	403K	584K	888K
083K	165K	417K	618K	890K
085K	198P	429K	633K	
086K	224K	456K	667K	
096K	266K	465K	706K	
102K	292K	472K	729K	

BRANCH 1 – LAKEWOOD, OH

The next meeting of the Saint Joseph Society will be held on Sunday, April 27, 2025 at 1:00pm at Panera Bread, 19705 Center Ridge Road, Rocky River, OH. Those interested in attending, contact Rochelle Popovich at 216-789-6390 by April 15th. All members are welcome to attend.

Submitted by **Barbara J. Golias, Secretary**

BRANCH 19 – BRIDGEPORT, CT

The St. Joseph Society, Branch 19, will hold a virtual ZOOM meeting on Sunday, June 8, 2025 at 10:00am. At this meeting, we will announce the recipients of the Margaret Evancho award. This award was established in recognition of the many years Margaret Evancho dedicated to the youth of Branch 19. We cordially invite interested members to join our ZOOM meeting:

Link: tinyurl.com/BRCH19
Meeting ID: 825 1729 0006
Passcode: 345384

We look forward to reconnecting with our members.

Submitted by **Deborah M. Nelson, Secretary**

BRANCH 24 – CLEVELAND, OH

Branch 24 will hold a meeting on Sunday, May 4th, 2025, starting at 1:00pm. Branch 24 members will meet in the Walton Hills Village Hall, 7595 Walton Rd, Walton Hills, OH (corner of Alexander and Walton Rds; the parking lot is off of Alexander Rd). A Cinco de Mayo themed lunch will be served directly after the meeting. Dress as your favorite Star Wars character (May the fourth be with you!) or Cinco de Mayo attire; prizes will be given to the best dressed! All members who plan to attend must call Fran Strekal at 216-308-1728 by April 28th. On the agenda: general branch business and fraternal activities. All members are welcome.

Submitted by **John Moynihan, President**

BRANCH 38 – WHITE OAK, PA

Holy Trinity Society, Branch 38 will hold a ZOOM branch meeting on Thursday, May 15, 2025 at 6:30pm. The agenda will include discussion on 2025 summer Fraternal social activities and proposed Fall and Winter events. The intention for these activities is to foster social connections and offer a sense of community and belonging. In order to be most inclusive for all members, any Branch 38 member interested in attending this meeting can remotely attend via ZOOM using the following meeting information:

Topic: Branch 38 Meeting
Time: May 15th at 6:30pm
Eastern Standard Time
Link: tinyurl.com/BRCH38
Meeting ID: 899 8809 7228
Passcode: 285576

All Branch 38 members are urged to attend. We look forward to joining together.

Submitted by **Logan Haselhoff, President**

BRANCH 45 – NEW YORK, NY

The St. Matthew's the Evangelist Society will hold a semi-annual meeting on Sunday, June 1, 2025 at 1:00pm after the Slovak mass at St. John Nepomucene Church, 66th Street and 1st Avenue, New York, NY. We urge all members to attend this meeting.

Submitted by **Maria Jurasi, Financial Secretary**

ČLENSKÁ SCHÔDZA SPOLKU SV. MATÚŠA Č. 45 1KSJ V

Oznamujeme členom nášho spolku, že sa uskutoční polročná členská schôdza sv. Matúša č. 45 1KSJ v New Yorku po slovenskej svätej omši v nedeľu 1. júna, 2025 o 13:00 hodine v osadnej hale slovenského kostola sv. Jána Nepomuckého na Prvej Avenue a 66-tej ulici. Láskaovo žiadame našich členov o aktívnu účasť na tejto schôdzi.

Mária Jurášiová - pokladníčka

BRANCH 89 – MILWAUKEE, WI

We are planning an outing to a Milwaukee Milkmen baseball game on Sunday, June 8, 2025. The Milkmen are playing the Gary Railcats at Franklin Field, 7035 S. Ballpark Drive, Franklin, WI at 1:00pm. We will be in the "Hop Yard" area featuring unlimited food, drinks, and a Milkmen gift. All members of Branch 89 will have their ticket cost covered by the branch. Non-member guests may attend by purchasing their own ticket at a cost of \$44.00.

Please RSVP Suzy Scaife via email to suzie.scaife@gmail.com, or text/call 414-690-0687 before May 4th. Include in your RSVP the number of members and non-members who plan to attend.

We have a Facebook group! Search "FCSU Financial Branch 89, Milwaukee" on Facebook and join our group. We'll be posting events, information, things going on, and fun things about Slovakia.

Submitted by **Suzy Scaife, Fraternal Activities**

BRANCH 112 – MAHANAY CITY, PA

St. John the Baptist, Mahanoy City will hold a branch meeting on Saturday, May 3, 2025 starting at noon at Palermo's Restaurant, King Shopping Center, Minersville Highway, Minersville, PA. The agenda will include officer reports and new business. Please join us for a light lunch and discussion on the many events happening in FCSU. For more information contact Karen Sterling 570-640-1796 by April 26th.

Submitted by **Karen Sterling, Secretary**

BRANCH 153 – CHICAGO, IL

St. Stephen Branch 153 will hold our semi-annual meeting on Saturday, June 14, 2025 at 11:30am at Cucina Biagio, 7319 West Lawrence, Harwood Heights. A fraternal luncheon will follow the meeting. Please call Dorothy to reserve your place at 708-995 7378 by June 4th.

Submitted by **John Jurcenko, President**

BRANCH 162 – UNIONTOWN, PA

The St. Wendelin Society, Branch 162, will hold its quarterly meeting at 11:00am on Sunday, June 22, 2025 at the Bud Murphys Restaurant, 718 McCormick Avenue, Connellsville, PA. All members and their guests are invited to attend by calling Dolores Marmol at 724-437-4983 for reservations by June 16th. Officers' reports will be given and discussion of branch activities, charitable donations and upcoming FCSU events will follow. We hope you will join us to learn more about our branch and activities.

Submitted by **Dolores Marmol, Secretary**

BRANCH 166 – BINGHAMTON, NY

Happy almost Spring, Branch members! We hope you have been well!

We will be having our semi-annual meeting Saturday, May 3, 2025 at 10:30am at Denny's Restaurant, 1250 Upper Front Street, Binghamton, NY. Please NOTE the time change. We are looking forward to seeing you at the

meeting!

Address any questions to Morgan Dendler at 607-206-7243. Have a great month! Spring is right around the corner!

Submitted by **Judie Dendler, Secretary**

BRANCH 173 – WILKES-BARRE, PA

The Saint John the Baptist Society, located in Northeast Pennsylvania, will hold its next meeting on Sunday, April 13, 2025 at Adelina's Restaurant, 166 S. Mountain Blvd., Mountain Top, PA starting at 1:00pm. General business and activities of Branch 173 will be discussed, as will the insurance, annuities, and fraternal activities of the FCSU.

Please try to attend and notify Dorothy Ungvarsky at 570-403-2067 so arrangements can be made.

Submitted by **Matthew Ungvarsky, Recording Secretary**

BRANCH 199 – HOSTETTER, PA

Branch 199 will hold a meeting on Sunday, April 27, 2025 at 1:00pm at Sharkeys Cafe, 3960 Lincoln Highway, Latrobe, PA. The agenda will include planning of summer activities and volunteer opportunities. You are encouraged to attend. Lunch will be provided by the branch. See you there!

Submitted by **Barb Patula, Recording Secretary**

BRANCH 200 – FORD CITY, PA

Please join us at our regular Board Meetings on the first Thursday of each month except June & July. Our next meeting is May 1, 2025. The meeting will be held at the Slovak CU at 910 Sixth Ave., Ford City, PA. The Board meeting starts at 7:00pm. All other members will be called in at approximately 7:20pm.

Bring your ideas and suggestions. We look forward to seeing you there!

Take a look in this issue for a "Save the Date" ad for our 130th Anniversary Celebration of Branch 200 taking place October 11, 2025. Also, watch your mailboxes for ticket information and the itinerary of the celebration. Make your reservations early – tickets are limited!

Submitted by **Vicki Schaub, Secretary**

BRANCH 213 – PITTSBURGH, PA

St. Michael the Archangel, Branch 213, will hold its semi-annual meeting on Sunday, June 8, 2025. It will be held at 1:00pm at 306 Barclay Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA. If planning on attending or joining the meeting via phone, please contact weaz1958@aol.com.

Our agenda will include Officer's reports, old business, Fraternal news and business, and Branch business. We will also discuss upcoming Branch and District events and activities.

Submitted by **Anita Nixon, President**

BRANCH 228 – LORAIN, OH

The St. John the Baptist/Holy Trinity Lodge, Branch 228, will hold their next meeting on Monday, June 16, 2025 at 7pm IN-PERSON at the American Slovak Club on 30th and Broadway in Lorain, OH.

BRANCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

This will be an informative meeting as the summer FCSU activities will be reviewed and refreshments will be served.

We respectfully ask all of our FCSU members to pray for a calm environment and unity among the leaders of the world.

Submitted by Thomas B. Zuffa,
Recording Secretary

BRANCH 260 – COITSVILLE, OH

Branch 260 will be having the following meetings for 2025: Thursday, April 24th, Thursday, September 25th, and Thursday, December 4th (this will be our election of officers and holiday celebration). All of our meetings will begin at 5:00pm and are held at Belleria Restaurant in Struthers, OH. Hope to see all of you in the coming year and God Bless!

Submitted by Carlie Peshek,
Vice President

BRANCH 276 – MCKEESPORT, PA

The next branch meeting will be held Sunday, May 18, 2025 at 1:00pm at Tillie's Restaurant at 308 36th Street, McKeesport, PA. We will hear reports from the treasurer and financial secretary. We will also review the Pittsburgh District meeting held in April.

Submitted by Margaret A. Nasta,
President

BRANCH 313 – ORLAND PARK, IL

Warmest Greetings Branch Members! Now that "spring has sprung", we will be hosting our first semi-annual branch meeting of the 2025 Year. The meeting will take place at 12:00pm (noon) on May 20, 2025 at the location of Fox's at Wolf Restaurant, 11247 West 187th St., Mokena, IL. A complimentary fraternal luncheon will follow the meeting. Please RSVP to Branch 313 President, Margaret Dickinson at 708-226-8157 by May 10th to reserve your place. All branch members are welcome to join us. If you are able to make it, we look forward to seeing you there! Have a great Summer, everyone!!

Submitted by Jennifer Carlton,
Financial Secretary

BRANCH 410 – UNIONTOWN, PA

The SS. Peter and Paul Society, Branch 410, will hold a meeting on Thursday, July 17, 2025, at 1:30pm at the Highland House, 92 West Main Street, Uniontown, PA. Please call for reservations by Monday, July 14th at 724-425-2576. All members are encouraged to attend.

Submitted by Geraldine Buchheit,
Secretary

BRANCH 450 – CLEVELAND, OH

St. Joseph the Guardian Society, Branch 450, will hold its semi-annual meeting at 11:00am on Saturday, April 12, 2025. The meeting will be held in the Community Room at Panera Bread restaurant located at 5090 Tiedeman Road, Brooklyn, OH. On the agenda will be the officer's reports, any correspondence that we may receive and discussion of District 10 and Branch activities for the summer. All members are encouraged to attend. Refreshments will be served after the meeting. Please RSVP by Wednesday, April 9th if you are planning on attending so we can make sure there is enough food for all. RSVP by calling Frank Woyma at 216-225-5688.

Submitted by Frank Woyma,
President

BRANCH 484 – CORAL, PA

St. Joseph Society Branch 484KJ will hold its semi-annual meeting on Saturday, June 14, 2025, at 2:00pm at Eat 'n Park Restaurant, 2301 Route 286 South, Indiana, PA. All members are welcome. The agenda will include responses received to our year-end financial donations, member participation in FCSU contests and tournaments, scholarship inquiries and any other matters concerning our branch. May we all have a Healthy and Happy Spring and Summer!

Submitted by Monica Rura,
Financial Secretary

BRANCH 587 – ALIQUIPPA, PA

Branch 587, Aliquippa, PA will hold it's semi-annual meeting on Sunday,

June 8, 2025 at the home of Branch President Joanne Fibbi - 1741 Hempstead Lane, Pittsburgh, PA. Lunch will be served at 2:00pm, followed by the business meeting. Topics to include new membership and fraternal activities. Kindly RSVP to Joanne at 412-953-4721 or jfibbi@gmail.com. All members are encouraged to attend.

Submitted by Joanne Fibbi,
President

BRANCH 682 – YOUNGSTOWN, OH

Our next regular meeting is scheduled for noon on Wednesday, April 23, 2025 at Materials Research Laboratories, 290 N Bridge St. in Struthers, OH. The meeting will address planning for the remainder of the year.

Submitted by Drew Hirt,
President

BRANCH 716 – NEW YORK, NY

The St. Stephen Society will hold its first semi-annual meeting of the year 2025 on Sunday, April 27th. The meeting will be held in person at St. John Nepomucene Church, 411 E 66th St, New York, NY, following the conclusion of the Slovak Mass at 12:30pm. The agenda will include a discussion of branch activities, financial reports, and event planning. Refreshments will be provided at the meeting and all members of Branch 716 are highly encouraged to attend.

Submitted by Emily Lysáková,
Recording Secretary

BRANCH 731 – YOUNGSTOWN, OH

Mark your calendars for the following Branch meetings:

- Sunday, May 18, 2025
- Sunday, July 13, 2025
- Sunday, September 14, 2025
- Sunday, November 16, 2025 (includes Election of Officers for 2026)

Meetings begin at 5:00pm at Belleria, 8485 Market St. in Boardman, OH.

A Mass for deceased members will be held November 11, 2025 at 12:10pm

at St. Columba Cathedral, 159 W Rayen Ave, Youngstown, OH.

Please come join us – we'd love to see some new members!

Submitted by Anna Schwanitz,
Recording Secretary

BRANCH 746 – LINDEN, NJ

Members are encouraged to attend Friday Holy Masses at 7:00pm (in Slovak) at Holy Family Church in Linden, NJ. Masses are offered for the intention of all Branch members living and deceased as follows: May 2nd, June 6th, July 4th, August 1st, September 5th, October 3rd, November 7th, and December 5th.

Submitted by Mary Kapitan,
Secretary

BRANCH 853 – CHARLEROI, PA

SAVE THE DATE: Branch members "Save the Date" for the Hlinka District picnic on June 1, 2025 at 1:00pm. Watch for more details. Contact the branch president at fcsubbranch853@gmail.com for more information and to make a reservations. There is no cost to branch 853 members.

Submitted by Monica Boone,
President

BRANCH 855 – CLEVELAND, OH

All Branch 855 members are invited to attend The Tamburitzans Folk Ensemble performance at Independence High School, 6001 Archwood Rd, Independence, Ohio on Sunday, April 27, 2025 at 3:00pm. All Branch 855 members will receive a FREE ticket if purchased through the BRANCH. We have special group ticket pricing. If purchased at the box office we will not reimburse your ticket cost. Guests of Branch 855 members may also purchase tickets through the Branch. Tickets range from \$16.00 to \$32.00. Call/text Branch President Barbara Sutila at 440-864-4744 for more details.

Submitted by Stephanie Sutila,
Activities Coordinator

Jednota Crossword Puzzle

Across

- 1 Study
- 4 Cast
- 8 Mexican sandwich
- 12 Greek letter
- 13 Creme cookie
- 14 Matinee hero
- 15 Hereditary factors
- 16 Deliberately
- 18 Japanese sash
- 19 Nile viper
- 21 Make lace
- 22 Brit. conservative
- 24 Word of regret
- 27 Rube
- 31 The Hustler locale
- 33 Water carrier
- 34 Narrow inlet
- 35 Saltwater fish
- 38 Hairpiece
- 39 Nutty as a fruitcake
- 43 Maneuvers
- 45 Citrus drink

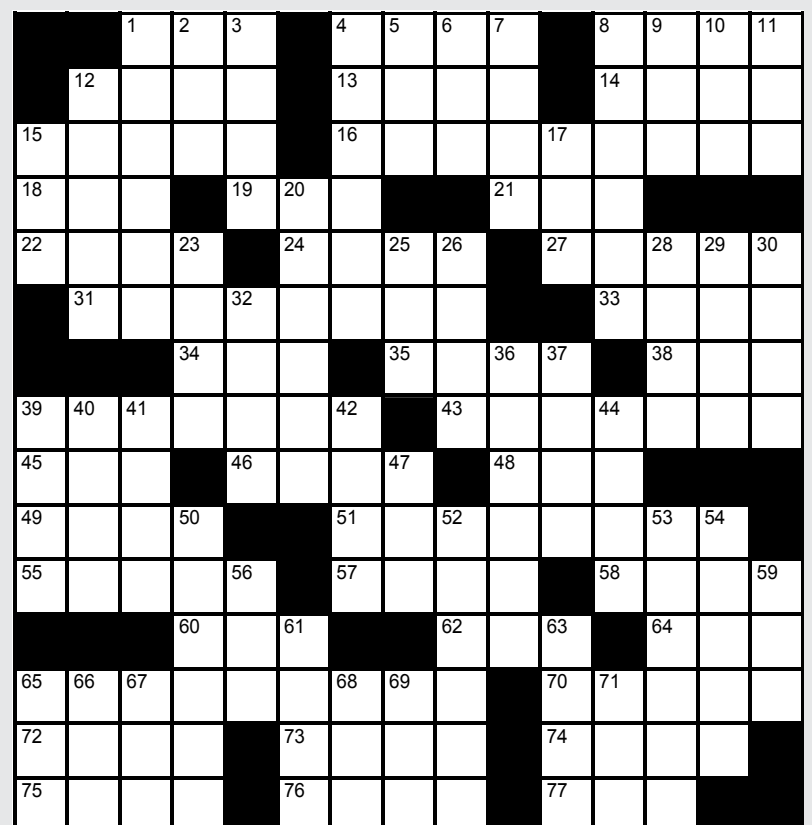
Down

- 1 Taxi Driver lead
- 2 Summer on the Seine

- 3 Astronaut's insignia
- 4 Ballyhoo
- 5 Samovar
- 6 Gym unit
- 7 Clod
- 8 Good shape?
- 9 Rumpus
- 10 Romaine lettuce
- 11 Córdoba cry
- 12 Jazz style
- 15 Figured out
- 17 Sunbeam
- 20 Desert
- 23 Part of NYC
- 25 Priest's robe
- 26 Bed board
- 28 Flightless bird
- 29 Large-scale
- 30 Table parts
- 32 Emulated Pinocchio
- 36 Cavalry swords
- 37 Operation reminder

- 39 Paul Bunyan's ox
- 40 Smell
- 41 Imminent
- 42 Transgresses
- 44 Jog
- 47 Have dinner
- 50 Veto
- 52 Injured badly
- 53 Polished
- 54 Hotel offering
- 56 Hoover is one
- 59 Airport posting inits.
- 61 Wear a long face
- 63 Sea eagles
- 65 Sleazy paper
- 66 Lab eggs
- 67 Waikiki wear
- 68 Calendar square
- 69 Apple picker
- 71 Debtor's note

Answers can be found on Page 31





Stephen C. Matula SCHOLARSHIP



**20 Scholarships
\$5,000 Each**

STEPHEN C. MATULA SCHOLARSHIP for 20 College Students of Slovak Heritage

Who Can Apply:

Applicants of Slovak heritage are eligible to apply as high school seniors, or during any year of full-time enrollment in an accredited College/University. Applicants can apply each year in college (up to 4 years).

Applicants must complete and sign an official Scholarship application obtained from a branch officer, the Home Office or www.fcsu.com and mail it to: **Stephen C. Matula Scholarship, FCSU, 6611 Rockside Rd, #300, Independence, OH 44131**. Applicants must also provide a high-resolution headshot photo and email it to scholarship@fcsu.com.

Winners will be chosen by the Scholarship Committee and checks will be payable to the winner's educational institution after submitting proof of college enrollment.

Winners must provide a report on their progress in college, including transcript and a summary of use of the funds by the end of the school year.

What to Provide:

- Completed Application
- Official Transcript
- Essay
- Photo
- 2 Letters of Recommendation
(obtained in the last 12 months)



**DEADLINE TO APPLY:
JUNE 3, 2025**

Find Scholarship Applications at FCSU.com
(fcsu.com/membership-benefits/scholarships).

For more info call us at 800.533.6682 ext. 114 or email scholarship@fcsu.com.

BRING THE FAMILY AND JOIN THE FUN!



A MUSEMENT RESORT

NATIONAL PICNIC SATURDAY, JUNE 21ST

391 Knoebels Blvd • Elysburg, PA • knoebels.com

**FREE ADMISSION AND FREE PARKING
FOR ALL FCSU MEMBERS, FAMILY AND
GUESTS FROM 12:00PM – 8:00PM**

**Each Pre-Registered FCSU Member
will receive 1 FREE BOOK of Tickets**
(\$20.00 value). Rain or shine event.

AMUSEMENT PARK:

- Check in begins at 11:00am (Pavilion V); Park hours: 12:00pm-8:00pm
- Pool hours: 11:00am-6:00pm (\$9.00, kids 2-11 \$7.00)
- Complimentary lunch served from 3:00pm-3:45pm (Pavilion V)
- MASS at 4:00pm celebrated by Fr. Tom Nasta (Pavilion V)

HOTEL ACCOMMODATIONS:

Members must make their own hotel reservations

- Hampton Inn • 137 Old Valley School Rd • Danville, PA
570-271-2500 • tinyurl.com/Knoebels2025
- Room rate: 2 queen beds \$155.00 per night
- To get our reduced rate on the phone, tell the operator you are with FCSU Financial or ask for Group Code **FCS**.
- To get our reduced rate online, choose the dates of your stay. On the Select a Room Page, click the box "Special Rates". Put the 3-digit code **FCS** under Group Code.
- Book before 6/2/2025 (limited block of rooms)

OTHER FREE ATTRACTIONS:

- Bald Eagle Habitat
- Carousal Museum
- Davison Family Circus
- Knoebels History Museum
- Mining Museum
- Summit Hill Bluegrass Band



NATIONAL PICNIC SATURDAY, JUNE 28TH

9346 Kinsman Rd • Novelty, OH • wlakepark.com

**FREE ADMISSION AND FREE PARKING
FOR ALL FCSU MEMBERS, FAMILY AND
GUESTS FROM 11:00AM – 7:00PM**

With clean, beautiful grounds, there is plenty to do for everyone. You can enjoy paddle boats, playgrounds, softball, horseshoes, swimming, as well as lots of great food served all day long.

Shuttle service available from picnic grounds to Mass.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS:

- Check in begins at 11:00am
- Free all you can eat food from 12:00pm – 6:00pm
- BINGO from 1:00pm – 2:00pm
- MASS at 4:00pm celebrated on wedding deck
- Unlimited ice cream treats, hot and cold drinks, popcorn all day

ATTRACTIONS:

- Corn Hole
- Playgrounds
- Sand Volleyball
- Basketball
- Paddle Boats
- Bingo
- Horseshoes
- Soccer Field
- Face Painting
- Softball Field
- Swimming

No alcohol or pets permitted on premises.
Rain or shine event.

REGISTER BY JUNE 6TH

Register Online • Email events@fcsu.com

Call the Home Office at 800.533.6682 ext. 119

REGISTER BY JUNE 10TH

Register Online • Email events@fcsu.com

Call the Home Office at 800.533.6682 ext. 119

DISTRICT ANNOUNCEMENTS

All new DISTRICT Announcements should be sent to district@fcsu.com

DISTRICT 1 – REV MATTHEW JANKOLA DISTRICT – CT, MA

The Reverend Matthew Jankola District will conduct its semi-annual meeting via Zoom on June 8, 2025 at 11:30am. At this meeting, we will discuss plans for the coming year. Interested members are encouraged to join our Zoom meeting:

Link: <https://tinyurl.com/FCSUD1>
Meeting ID: 868 6396 3178
Passcode: 113295

We look forward to hearing from our dedicated members.

Submitted by Deborah M. Nelson, Recording Secretary

DISTRICT 4 – MSGR JOHN E RURA DISTRICT – NJ

District 4 is organizing an outing to the Somerset Patriots Baseball game and BBQ on Sunday, July 13, 2025. Tickets are free for all members of District 4 (Branches 102, 132, 290, 652, 746). Non-members are welcome to join for \$38.00 per person/child. The price includes entrance to the ballpark, a 90-minute buffet, and designated picnic style seating. Come join us for a fun evening of fraternalism and baseball! RSVP is required. For details, contact Jo Anne Peppe at gsmgjp@aol.com before June 20th.

Submitted by Sabina Sabados, Region 1 Director

DISTRICT 6 – PITTSBURGH DISTRICT – PA

Branch 35 will host the Spring District 6 business meeting on Sunday, April 27, 2025 at 1:00pm at the Holy Trinity Church hall of St Thomas the Apostle Parish, 529 Grant Avenue Extension, West Mifflin, PA. We will discuss business matters and plan events for the season. Please RSVP by April 19th to 412-824-4185 or fcsu35@gmail.com.

Other events of local interest.

- WPSCA: Meets at 7:00pm first Monday at the Mt Lebanon Public Library.
May 5: Julia Warhola.
- WPSCA sponsors scholarships and hosts various events such as wine tastings.
Become a member and get the newsletter.
- Slovak Day at Kennywood: Thursday, July 17, 2025.
- Slovak Heritage Day at Pitt: Sunday, November 2, 2025.
- Western PA Slovak Radio Hour: WPIT 96.5 FM / 730 AM.

As always, members are urged to check the Jednota for updates on FCSU business matters, social events, and contests. Be sure your beneficiaries are up to date. FCSU insurance information and forms can be found at FCSU.com

Submitted by Margaret A. Nasta, Recording Secretary

DISTRICT 7 – REV JOHN MARTVON DISTRICT – PA

Please note District 7 will hold our First Annual Meeting on Sunday, May 4, 2025. The meeting place will be at the Hoss's Family Restaurant at 441 Theater Drive in Johnstown, PA. The meeting is scheduled to start at 1:30pm with New Year New News. We will have lunch following the meeting. Branch 23 will host this meeting. Any questions, please call Theresa 814-254-2532.

Submitted by Mary Kuzilla, Secretary

DISTRICT 8 – REV. STEPHEN FURDEK DISTRICT – PA, NC

The Rev. Stephen Furdek District 8 will hold its semi-annual meeting during the 2025 FCSU National Picnic at Knoebels Amusement Resort in Elysburg, PA on June 21, 2025. There will be more details to come concerning the timing and logistics of the meeting during the Picnic so stay tuned! We invite all branches in District 8 to come out and join in the fun of the Picnic before and after our meeting. Again, more information in the next Jednota but if you have questions please email or call the District 8 Recording Secretary at jeaustin89@gmail.com or 315-391-0526.

Submitted by Jo Austin, Recording Secretary

DISTRICT 9 – THE FRANK T. HOLLY JR. DISTRICT – PA

The Frank T. Holly Jr. District of Uniontown, PA will hold a meeting on Sunday, July 13, 2025, at 1:00pm at the Dairy Queen Grill and Chill, 575 West Main St., in Uniontown, PA. Region 4 Director James Marmol will be informing the members of upcoming Jednota events. All members are urged to attend.

Submitted by Barbara A. Holly, Secretary

DISTRICT 12 – MSGR ANDREW HLINKA DISTRICT – PA

Come join the Hlinka District of the Mon Valley for a picnic on June 1, 2025 from 1:00pm-4:00pm at Cedar Creek Park, 453 Evergreen Dr., Belle Vernon, PA. All members of District 12 branches are free to attend. Non members are welcome at a cost of \$20.00. Please RSVP by Wednesday May 28th to hlinkadistrictsecretary@gmail.com or call 412-341-1577. We look forward to seeing you there!

Submitted by Monica Boone, Secretary

DISTRICT 14 – REV JOSEPH L KOSTIK DISTRICT – OH, PA

We will hold a meeting on Tuesday, April 29, 2025 at The Fireplace, 2075 E. Western Reserve Rd., Poland, OH at 6:00pm. With the sudden passing of our President, John L. Leskovyansky, Jr., this meeting will include an Election of Officers for 2025. We encourage all District 14 members to attend.

Submitted by Carlie Peshek, Vice President

DISTRICT 16 – MSGR STEPHEN KRASULA DISTRICT – NY

District 16 is organizing an outing to the Somerset Patriots Baseball game and BBQ on Sunday, July 13, 2025. Tickets are free for members of District 4 (Branches 45, 716). Non-members are welcome to join for \$38.00 per person/child. The price includes entrance to the ballpark, 90-minute Buffet, and designated picnic style seating. Come join us for a fun evening of fraternalism and baseball! RSVP is required. For details, contact Jo Anne Peppe at gsmgjp@aol.com before June 20th.

Submitted by Sabina Sabados, Region 1 Director

DISTRICT 17 – SS CYRIL & METHIDIUS DISTRICT – NY, PA

Saints Cyril & Methodius District 17 of Lackawanna and Luzerne counties in Pennsylvania and Broome County in New York will conduct its Annual Spring Meeting on Saturday, April 26, 2025. Branch delegates will gather at Cooper's Seafood Restaurant, 701 N. Washington Avenue, Scranton, PA.

District Auditors will meet at 12:30pm to check the books. The business meeting will convene at 1:00pm.

This is an important meeting as Branch representatives will discuss future District activities including the National Picnic, the District baseball game, and transportation to Washington, D.C. for the anniversary of the Chapel of Our Lady of Sorrows. Information from the Home Office will be disseminated. All branches are urged to send representatives to this meeting. Attendees will enjoy a buffet lunch and time to socialize.

Branches must contact District Fraternal Activities Officer Elizabeth M. Slovenkai at 570-344-3854 to confirm attendance by Wednesday, April 16, 2025, so that we comply with the requirements stipulated by Cooper's Seafood Restaurant.

Submitted by Michael J. Slovenkai, President

Save The Date for Our 130th Anniversary Celebration!

Saturday, October 11, 2025

Slovak CU Branch 200, Ford City, PA

Starts With Mass at 1:00pm

Followed By Meet & Greet, Dinner & Dance

Contact Vicki Schaub for Details

724-763-9229 or uschaub123@gmail.com

District 9 Officers



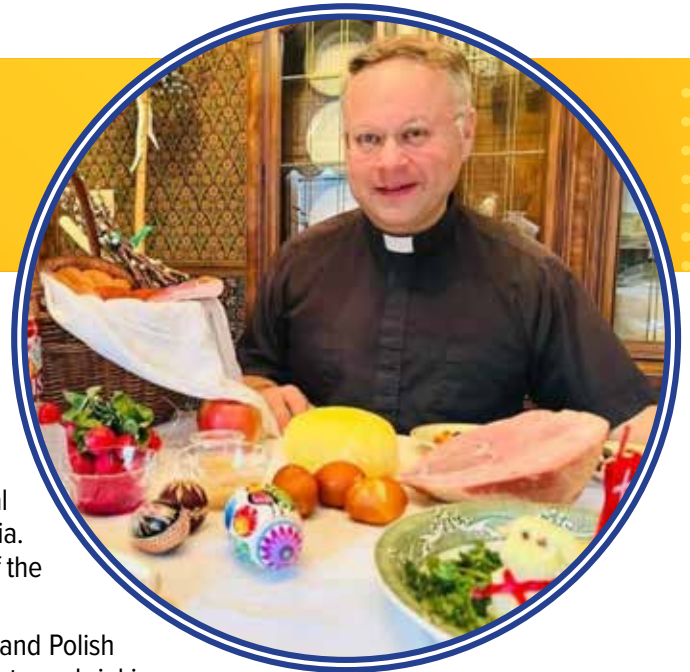
The Frank T. Holly, Jr. District elected officers at their annual meeting held on March 9, 2025 at Jamie Lynn's Cafe at 1618 Georges Fairchance Road, Smithfield, PA. Pictured from left are Barbara Holly (Secretary), Rose Roskevsky (Treasurer), Patty Speshock (President), Bill Speshock (Vice President) and Kathryn Baranek (Auditor). The officers were sworn in by Regional Director James Marmol.



You Still Have Time to Add Funds to Your Annuities and IRA's for the 2024 Tax Year.

MEMBER *Spotlight*

FATHER ARON MAGHSOUDI



A Pilgrimage Rooted in Faith and Heritage: A Slovak Journey from Central City to Europe

For the families of Our Lady Queen of Angels Parish in Central City, Pennsylvania, this summer will bring more than just a change of scenery. It will mark a life-changing journey of faith, culture, and history as a group of local students and their families embark on a pilgrimage to Slovakia, Poland, Hungary, Austria, Slovenia, and Croatia. This extraordinary trip, which begins on June 11 and returns June 23, is made possible thanks to the support of the parish and community.

Nestled in the coal fields of northern Somerset County, Central City is a place where generations of Slovak and Polish immigrants once sought a better life in the mines. Despite the decline of the coal industry, which has led to a shrinking population (currently at 998), the community remains deeply connected to its roots. Many families, including those of the students traveling this summer, are descendants of the Slovaks who came here over a century ago.

The parish, originally founded in 1917 as St. John the Baptist Church for Slovak immigrants, continues to honor its cultural heritage while fostering a strong sense of community. The merger of St. John's with Sacred Heart Parish in 1999 resulted in the creation of Our Lady Queen of Angels, which remains a beacon of faith and tradition in an area that is often overlooked.

"We are proudly Slovak," says Father Maghsoudi. "This pilgrimage is a continuation of the vision of our ancestors who left Slovakia to build a new life in America. Their strength, faith, and commitment to preserving their culture is something we want to pass on to the next generation."

The journey is not just about travel; it's about building intergenerational bonds. The trip will include 17 students and at least one parent, spanning grades 7-12, many of whom have never flown on a plane let alone left the country. For these families, a trip of this magnitude would otherwise be out of reach. The average per capita income in Central City is \$13,263, making this journey an incredible gift, one that would be impossible without the financial support of the parish and its fundraising efforts.

One of the parish's primary fundraising events, the Dyngus Day Party (known as Oblievacka in Slovakia), has helped to fund the trip. The annual event, featuring live polka music, homemade ethnic foods, and games of chance, draws several hundred people and celebrates the community's rich Slovak heritage. In addition, generous donations from the community, including those of the local Slovak fraternal, will help to defray the costs of the trip.

This year's pilgrimage will take the travelers to several iconic destinations, many of which are steeped in the history and culture of the Slovak people. The itinerary includes rafting on the Dunajec River, visits to ancestral villages, and an overnight stay at the monastery museum in Cerveny Klastor. The group will also take in a performance by the Vagonar Folk Ensemble from Poprad, visit the famous Wawel Cathedral in Krakow, and attend Mass in the private chapel where Pope John Paul II was ordained. Other stops include Auschwitz, the Salt Mines in Wieliczka, and historical sites in Hungary, Austria, Slovenia, and Croatia.

Father Maghsoudi believes this pilgrimage will not only deepen the students' connection to their heritage but also strengthen their faith. "Our Catholic faith is the foundation of everything we do," he says. "By visiting these sacred sites, we hope our young people will see how our faith has shaped our culture and continue to carry it with them as they grow into adulthood."

The trip also holds personal significance for Father Maghsoudi, whose mothers' family hails from Slovakia. "I've been to Slovakia many times and stay in close contact with my relatives there," he shares. "This trip is an opportunity to connect with the land of my ancestors and to share that connection with the next generation."

Father Maghsoudi is a proud member of the First Catholic Slovak Union (FCSU), and as chaplain of Branch 181 and the George Onda District, he is working to secure additional support for the trip from the organization. The FCSU has long been a supporter of the Slovak community, and he sees this trip as an extension of the vision of Father Furdek.

Father Maghsoudi encourages others to support the trip by donating to the parish. "Every little bit helps," he says. "This pilgrimage is not just about seeing the world; it's about helping our young people see who they are and where they come from. It's a gift that will last a lifetime."

Donations can be sent to Our Lady Queen of Angels Parish, 738 Sunshine Avenue, Central City, PA 15926. Any support will help ensure that more students from this vibrant, yet struggling, community can take part in this life-changing experience.

Branch 853 Showcase Art & Fellowship



On February 25th, Branch 853 members worked on their artistic ability in a painting event at Off The Wall Arts in Charleroi, PA. Professional artist Casey Clark worked with the branch members, Marianne Rodacy, Charles Boone, Monica Boone and Susan Painter where they went from a blank canvas to an outstanding work of art. Congratulations Branch 853 members on such beautiful paintings.

WILD THINGS

District 12 Members Save the Date
Fireworks Friday
July 25th at 7:05 pm
 Join us for a fun night of
baseball, fireworks and fun!

Questions? Contact Joseph Tarquinio
 (District 12 Vice President)
 tark918@gmail.com

This is a District 12 Event, but everyone is invited
 to join us for this fraternal night at the park.





Rest in Peace Our Departed Members



The First Catholic Slovak Union has a Mass said for each of our deceased members at St. Andrew Abbey in Cleveland, Ohio.

Eternal rest, grant unto them O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. May the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.
 Odpočinutie večné daj im, Pane, a svetlo večné, nech im svieti. Duše všetkých verných zomrelých, pre milosrdenstvo Božie, nech odpočívajú v pokoji. Amen

BRANCH	NAME	BRANCH	NAME	BRANCH	NAME	BRANCH	NAME
002K	Mary N. Gallick	153K	John F. Abarre	322K	Geraldine Podgorski	731K	Josephine Horney
003P	Mark P. Koval	173K	Agnes R. Naro	330K	Michael Hazen	743K	Agnes Donahue
005P	William Bousa	173K	James Lininger	348K	Evelyn Ann Harris	764K	Thaddeus Malys
006K	Joseph J. Chico	181K	Jane Smail	382K	Lynda Kolebar	796K	Donna Weimer
019K	Theresa M Kuruc	181K	Robert Eugene Logan	401K	Anna Troya	796K	Kathryn Kubinsky
024K	Robert A. Sopko	181K	Sonia Kaputa	419K	Peter Gvozdas	900K	Cynthia M. Brzuski
024K	Ronald Suster	199K	William Koslosky	484K	Stephen J. Shemo	900K	Georgann M. Hoag
038K	Gregory L. Smetana	200K	Jack Baculik	553K	Rosemary Joan Mileski	904K	Joyce A. Weber
045K	Susan Fialkovich	200K	Mary L. Edwards	628K	Beverly Ann McCullough	916K	Harold N. Marshall
055K	Francis Barcoski	213K	Joseph William Belechak	670K	Dorothy J. Petrus	916K	Joann Faletti
085K	Marie Homentosky	228K	Douglas Paxton	670K	Mary F. Kuma	921K	Garlen J. Schwan
086K	Margaret A. Mondock	254K	John C. Drukalsky	670K	Nancy G. Vlcek	921K	Irene Rosten
089K	Anthony Jurik	254K	Mary Ann Kovach	716K	Jan J. Skrkon	924K	Marie D. Scislaw
128K	David Yancik	315K	Albert Edward Hruska	731K	Cecelia M. Dutko		

* Processed in the month of March 2025

OBITUARIES – NEKROLOGY

Joseph Belechak Branch 213 Valencia, PA



Formerly of North Braddock, a resident of Point Pleasant in North Versailles, passed away peacefully with his family present on Friday, January 10, 2025, at the age of 92.

Joe was the beloved husband of the late Mary Catherine (DeLucia) Belechak for 69 years.

He was the loving father of Aimee (Jesse) Campayno, Mary Jo (David) Caparosa, Diane (Joseph) Shaffo, Anita (Gary) Nixon, Joe (Michelle) Belechak, John (Johnette) Belechak and Jude (Ben Benack) Punturi. Joe was the devoted grandfather to 41 grandchildren and 25 great-grandchildren. He was preceded in death by his parents, Stephen and Elizabeth (Grunder) Belechak and his brother, Stephen (late Florence) Belechak.

Born and raised in North Braddock, Joe was a proud 1950 graduate of North Braddock Scott High School, where he earned a basketball scholarship to Geneva College.

Joe's journey took a patriotic turn when he enlisted in the US Air Force during the Korean War. After his military duties, Joe entered the apprenticeship program with Westinghouse in East Pittsburgh. He later became employed at Elliott Co. in Irwin from where he retired.

Joe was soon called upon by the Diocese of Pittsburgh to serve as the director of the Bishop Boyle Center in Homestead. For a decade, he led the center's job training program, helping displaced workers and the unemployed gain new skills and hope for the future

Joe loved his faith deeply, leading Bible Studies at Good Shepherd Parish and for his fellow residents at Point Pleasant. Over the years, Joe volunteered with several diocesan programs, including Marriage Encounter, Engaged Encounter, and T.E.C., a program designed to help teenagers grow closer to Christ.

Joe's spirit and loving nature were most apparent in how he lived his life every day. Joe's faith was the cornerstone of his life.

Cecelia Mary Dutko Branch 731 Youngstown, OH



Cecelia Mary Dutko, 96, of Boardman passed peacefully into eternal rest on December 19, 2024 after a long illness.

Born November 25, 1928, she was the oldest of five children to the late Andrew Grecko and MaryAnn Treyan Grecko. She attended St. Cyril and Methodius grade school then Rayen High School graduating in 1947.

On May 26, 1951, she married Joseph J. Dutko, moving to Cleveland, OH. Together they had five children living in several Northeastern Ohio cities during the early decades of their marriage. In each city, Cecelia was a strong volunteer supporting her children's Catholic grade schools. She was a Campfire girls troop leader for her daughters and a sports Mom for her boys.

She was a consummate homemaker taking great pride in her needlework, crafting and baking. Christmas was her favorite holiday. In later years, gardening and crafting were her hobbies.

She won first place at the Canfield Fair. Community Slovak heritage programs were important to her. She was a yearly volunteer in the International Building.

In her retirement years, she was a member of St. Charles Church where she participated in the gardening club, liturgical committee and volunteered at several church annual events. Cecelia loved talk radio especially broadcasts of YSU football and basketball games. She was an avid fan of the Cleveland Guardians.

Proceeded in death by her husband Joseph and her son Charles, she is survived by her brother Adrian Grecko (Betty), Boardman, daughters Patricia (Gerald) McCann, Canton, Nancy Ruth Dutko, Boardman, sons Joseph Dutko, Endwell, NY, Robert Dutko, Melbourne, FL and daughter-in-law Carol Poczekay Dutko, Lafayette, IN.

She also leaves four grandsons, Douglas McCann (Londa), Casey McCann (Chelsea), Timothy McCann (Amy) and William McCann (Cassidy).

McCann great-grandchildren include Devlin, Kayleigh, Riley, Connor, Cullen, Everleigh, Tyler, Brady, Olivia and Jackson.

Patricia "Patty" (Sedlak) Getsy Branch 38 White Oak, PA



Patricia "Patty" (Sedlak) Getsy, age 91 of Concord Twp., OH, formerly of North Versailles, PA, passed away peacefully on Wednesday, January 1, 2025, at Vista Springs Quail Highlands Assisted Living, Concord Twp., OH.

She was born August 15, 1933, in Dixonville, PA, as the oldest child of Paul and Pauline Sedlak. The family moved

to North Braddock when she was a young child. Patty attended primary school at St. Michaels in Braddock, where she met her husband to be in the first grade. She graduated from Scott High School, Class of 1951, taking the commercial course. At Scott High she was on the majorette squad. After graduation, Patty was employed as a secretary for Dr. Joe, a Braddock optometrist.

She married her childhood sweetheart in May 1955 and was married for 68 years. After marriage, Patty worked as a devoted homemaker raising her children. When they were grown, she worked briefly at the McKeesport Candy Company. She also was a committee woman in North Versailles for several years.

Her hobbies included gardening, craft projects, crocheting, and music. All who knew her knows, "Rocky Mountain High" was one of her favorite songs. Patty was an accomplished, self-taught chef and baker. She genuinely enjoyed the art of cooking, baking, and canning. She was an expert scrabble player and liked playing cards. Patty enjoyed watching cooking contests on the food network and Hallmark movies. Her sport was NFL football, watching games and predicting winners with her grandson, Paulie. This was a highlight of the football season for both of them.

Patty had a deep devotion to the Blessed Mother and was very devoted to the church. She volunteered for many years at the school cafeteria, with administrative support, and as a teacher's aide at St. Robert Bellarmine. She was a Promoter for the Central Association of the Miraculous Metal for over 50 years. Patty was also a member of the Jednota, First Catholic Slovak Union.

She had a kind heart and a gentle

OBITUARIES – NEKROLÓGY

demeanor that won the hearts of friends and family alike. She was always eager to help those in need.

Survivors include her children: John “Jay” Getsy and Joy (Paul) Jurkovic; grandchildren: Joe (Alexandra) Getsy, Jim Getsy, and Paulie Jurkovic.

She is preceded in death by her husband of 68 years: John A. Getsy Jr.; parents: Paul and Pauline Sedlak; sister, Pauline “Tootie” (Pete) Glenn and brother, Paul Sedlak Jr.

**Evelyn Ann Harris
Branch 348
Clarksburg, WV**



Evelyn Ann Harris, 95, of Clarksburg, passed away on Monday, February 3, 2025 at her residence. She was born on March 19, 1929 in Clarksburg, WV, a daughter of the late Steve and Anna “Tiffany” (Ladda) Martiska.

Evelyn was a graduate of Washington Irving High School Class of 1947. She retired from Kroger’s after working there for 41 years. She was a member of the Holy Rosary Slovak Church until its closing in 1984. She was a current member of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Catholic Church.

Evelyn is survived by her daughter, Debbie Kroll Gayheart and spouse Eddie of Savannah, GA; grandchildren, Tracy Dawn Childers and spouse Ron of Grafton, William “Billy” E. Harris III and spouse Kendra of Clarksburg, Steven Harris and spouse Jennifer of Clarksburg, Aime Shaffer and spouse Garth of Quiet Dell, and Chad Kroll and spouse Colleen of Bridgeport; great-grandchildren, Ellie Harris, Isaac Harris, Jake Shaffer, Lexi Shaffer, Cormac Kroll,

Carrigan Kroll, Cillian Kroll; brothers-in-law, Frank Harris and spouse Louise of Williamstown, WV and Neil DeVoe of York, PA; sister-in-law, Carolyn Nesselroade of Charlottesville, VA; and several nieces and nephews.

In addition to her parents, Evelyn was also preceded in death by her husband of 59 ½ years, William “Bill” E. Harris; one son, William “Hoag” E. Harris Jr.; two sisters, Margaret Ann Martiska and Julia Ann Martiska; and several brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law.

Honey Evelyn, as she was affectionately known by many, loved spending time with her family, especially her grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Anyone who knew Evelyn knew that she loved to tell it like it was and always had a Texas sheet cake on hand.

Evelyn was a member of the Shinns Run CEO Club and, being proud of her Slovak heritage, a member of The National Slovak Society.

**Charles E. Kinner
Branch 38
White Oak, PA**



Charles E. Kinner, 90, of Elizabeth Township, departed this earth on February 12, 2025 after a brief illness to be united with his 3 sons in heaven.

Charles was born Jan. 6, 1935 in Duquesne, PA and was the son of the late John Andrew and Mary (Varga) Kinner of West Mifflin. He leaves behind his devoted wife, partner and soul mate of over 70 years, Dorothy A. (Vovolka) Kinner.

Charles was retired from US National Tube Works in McKeesport where he

worked as a crane man and was a member of St. Michael Roman Catholic Church of Elizabeth Township.

In addition to his beloved wife, his survivors include daughters-in-law, Cheryl (Powell) Kinner and Vicki (Gantt) both of Buena Vista; grandsons; Brian Kinner of Buena Vista; and Steven (Kayla) Kinner of West Newton; granddaughter, Alisha (Nick) Lacey of Glassport; and 2 great-grandsons, Karson David and Kameron David Kinner; great-granddaughter, Skylar Emma Lacey; nieces Kathleen (Rob) Miskanic of Trafford; Andrea (Lance) Medich of Bethel Park; Karen (Brian) Schyberg of Sacramento, CA; nephew, Michael (Yvonne) McVay of Glendale, AZ; cousins, great nephews and great nieces. He was preceded in death by his 3 sons, Charles who died Dec. 2014; Ronald who died Aug. 2009 and John who died Oct. 2011; brothers John Kinner, Bernard Kinner and a sister, Mary Ann Kinner McVay & grandson, Ronald Kinner. Charles will be greatly missed by all those who knew and loved him.

**Marion G. Mistrik
Branch 856
Washington, D.C.**



We remember Marion G. Mistrik, age 88, of Bethesda, MD, who departed from us on Wednesday, November 20, 2024, after a long illness. She was born September 3, 1936, in Montreal, Quebec Canada to the late George and Terezia Javornik.

Beloved wife of the late Daniel B. Mistrik; devoted mother of Karin Mistrik-Dillet (and her late husband, Dominic Dillet) and Mark Mistrik (wife, Jessica); cherished grandmother of Nicholas and Danielle Dillet; loving sister of the late George Javornik (and his wife, Linda) and John Javornik (wife, Christina).

Marion attended McGill University, where she obtained her master’s degree in library science. She worked as the librarian for the Air Transport Association (ATA) in Washington, D.C. from 1975 to 2002. Marion was a Montgomery County Master Gardener, attending her garden in Bethesda and helping to maintain the healing garden at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center and the gardens at the Montgomery County Fairgrounds.

Marion was a member of Branch 856 in Washington, D.C. and served as Recording Secretary for many years.

**Albina Senko
Branch 254
Pittsburgh, PA**



Age 88, of Mt. Lebanon, on Sunday, March 9, 2025. Albina was born in

Slovenska Ves, Slovakia, daughter of the late William and Margaret Kolodziej; beloved wife for 69 years of Joseph T. Senko; mother of Ted (Cindy), Matthew (Cathy), Katherine (the late Frank) Yarussi, Christina (Stuart) Mitchell and the late John and Donna (surviving William) Hilliard; also survived by eight grandchildren, two great-grandchildren and her sisters Helen (Merle) Sharrer and Margaret (Ron) Kowalski. Albina grew up under German occupation in Slovakia during WWII.

She was a graduate of St. Michael High School, a former Girl Scout leader, as well as a former part owner of Golden Triangle Tours. Albina loved tennis and yoga and was an honorary mother to every kid that had the pleasure to be in her home.

**Sundi Tarullo Stein
Branch 2
Pittsburgh, PA**



Sundi Tarullo Stein, passed on Monday, February 10, 2025, one day after her 67th birthday.

Sundi courageously lived with juvenile diabetes for 60 years and kidney failure for these last 5. She grew personal strength to keep to the medical plan and not fall to temptations. Her longevity is evidence to that.

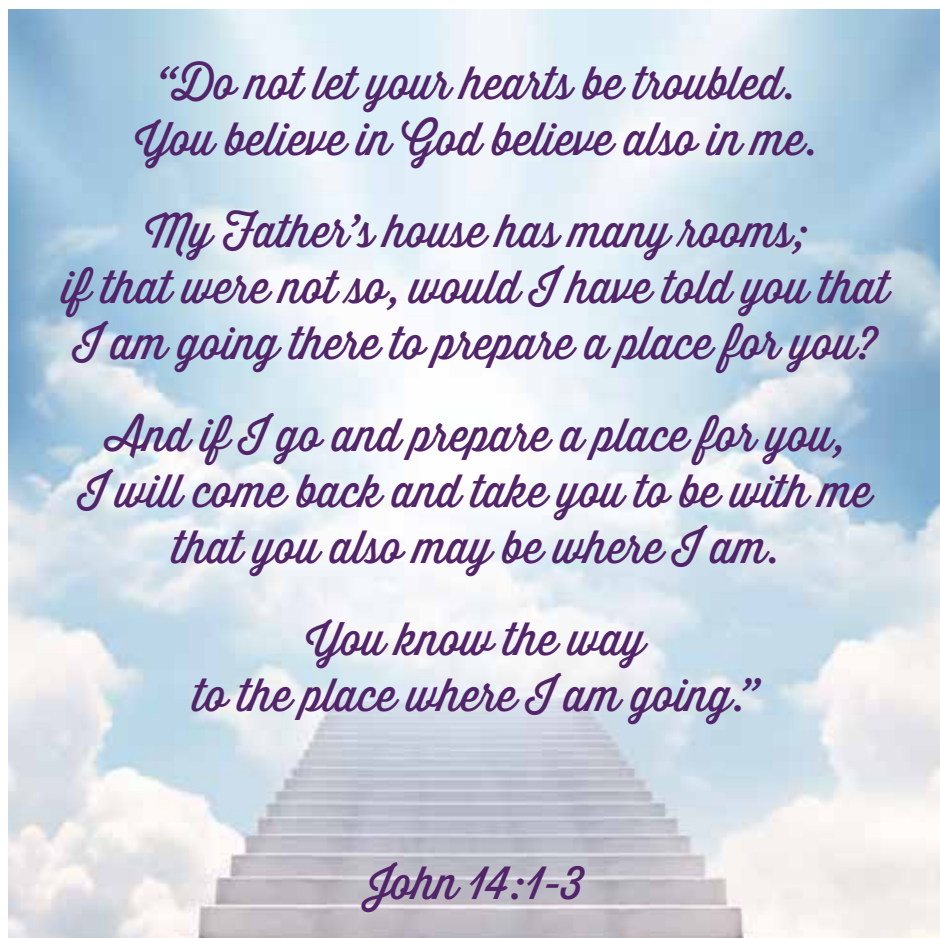
It is that spirit of individuality that led her to pursue a career in stage and theater. Her parents agreed with her love of performing arts and watched as she developed a profession starting at the age of 17, well beyond their expectations. Starting in high school her comedic acting style started showing. She worked for Don Brockett’s revue from 1975-77. Then went to West Virginia University on a full scholarship, achieving a BFA in acting. She learned to be a dramatic actress there, performing in Shakespeare plays while performing reviews on the side.

While in college Sundi met and later married George W. Stein and they made Washington, D.C. their home. There she performed for political satirical groups Capitol Steps and Hexagon Players. Then, she was a resident entertainer at the British Embassy for many years.

Sundi is predeceased by her husband, George, her father, Anthony but is survived by her mother, Marianne (Belo), and siblings David (Lisa), Judy Vose (Andrew) and Karen (Roy Lovell). She is survived by many aunts, uncles and cousins.

She has been dear Aunt Sundi to five loving nieces, Christine Tarullo, Julianne Tarullo-Pinell (Blake), Diana Vose-Rupprecht (Jeffrey), Lauren Vose and Jeana Vose.

Sundi passed while facing health complications with the same courage and grace she carried throughout her life.



OBITUARIES – NEKROLÓGY

Ján Skrkon Branch 716 New York, NY



With love to
Ján Skrkon
September 10, 1944
– January 28, 2025

On January 28, 2025, our dear Uncle Jan Skrkon passed away. He was my mother Maria Michtalikova's brother and they shared an unbreakable bond. Their daily conversations, often several times a day, indicated their close friendship.

Uncle Jan was a remarkable individual. His kindness, love, and infectious laughter made him the life of every gathering. He made sure everyone felt included and honored, and he and Aunt Joan consistently went above and beyond to make birthdays, holidays, and family events unforgettable. Uncle Jan's culinary skills were exceptional, he was one of the top chefs in the country and his delectable Slovak cuisine was the highlight of every occasion.

In addition to his culinary talent, Uncle Jan was actively involved in the Slovak church. He and Aunt Joan often hosted special events and holidays, showcasing their exceptional culinary skills and the love they shared for their community.

Growing up, I fondly remember the times Uncle Jan would create beautiful gingerbread houses from Cafe Geiger, where he was Chef. We eagerly anticipated enjoying these creations. Our family meals were filled with wonderful brunches at Tavern on the Green and other favorite restaurants, creating a sense of happiness and contentment.

Uncle Jan's unwavering joy for family and his unique ability to make every occasion special were the cornerstones of our shared memories.

Our beloved Uncle Jan and Aunt Joan loved to travel and lived life to the fullest. They maintained unwavering integrity and lived by their own guiding principles. They both shared a deep love for animals and were devoted cat parents to their babies, especially their precious Callie. They brought immense joy to their lives.

One of our favorite pastimes was visiting Uncle Jan's picturesque garden, where we would watch his kitties happily run to him. He even built comfortable garden lounges for them, creating a haven of love and peace. The memory of these moments will forever be etched in our hearts.

We are always the ones left grieving, we find comfort in knowing that you are surrounded by the love of Aunt Joan, Callie, Uncle Joe, Uncle Paul, Grandma, Grandpa, and our extended family and friends who have passed on.

Uncle Jan's life was a testament to the pursuit of happiness and fulfillment. Our hearts find comfort in the assurance that we will see one another again.

Rest in peace, dear Uncle Jan. Until we meet again, our family's love for you will last forever.

S láskou Ján Skrkon
10.9.1944 – 28.1.2025

Dňa 28. januára 2025 zomrel náš drahý strýko Jan Skrkon. Bol to brat mojej mamy Mária Michtálikova a spájalo ich nezlomné puto. Ich každodenné rozhovory, často niekoľkokrát denne,

naznačovali ich blízke priateľstvo.

Strýko Jan bol pozoruhodný jedinec. Jeho láskavosť, láska a nákazlivý smiech z neho urobili život každého stretnutia. Zabezpečil, aby sa každý cítil zahrnutý a poctený, a on a teta Joan dôsledne šli nad rámec toho, aby boli narodeniny, sviatky a rodinné udalosti nezabudnuteľné. Kulinárske umenie strýka Jana bolo výnimočné, bol jedným z najlepších šéfkuchárov v krajine a jeho delikátna slovenská kuchyňa bola vrcholom každej príležitosti.

Strýko Jan sa okrem kuchárskeho talentu aktívne angažoval v slovenskom kostole. S tetou Joan často organizovali špeciálne udalosti a sviatky, kde predvádzali svoje výnimočné kulinárske schopnosti a lásku, ktorú zdieľali ku komunite.

Keď som vyrastal, rád spomínam na časy, keď strýko Jan vytváral krásne perníkové chalúčky z Cafe Geiger, kde bol šéfkuchárom. Netrepeživo sme očakávali, že si tieto výtvary užijeme. Naše rodinné jedlá boli naplnené nádhernými brunchmi v Tavern on the Green a ďalších obľúbených reštauráciách, čo vytváralo pocit šťastia a spokojnosti.

Neochvejná radosť strýka Jana z rodiny a jeho jedinečná schopnosť urobiť každú príležitosť výnimočnou boli základnými kameňmi našich spoločných spomienok.

Náš milovaný strýko Jan a teta Joan radi cestovali a žili život naplno. Zachovali si neochvejnú integritu a žili podľa svojich vlastných zásad. Obaja zdieľali hlbokú lásku k zvieratám a boli oddanými mačacími rodičmi svojim deťom, najmä ich vzácnou Callie. Priniesli im do života nesmiernu radosť.

Jednou z našich obľúbených zábav bola návšteva malebnej záhrady strýka Jana, kde sme sledovali jeho mačiatka, ako k nemu šťastne bežia. Dokonca pre nich postavil pohodlné záhradné salóniky a vytvoril tak útočisko lásky a pokoja. Spomienka na tieto chvíle sa nám navždy vryje do srdca.

Vždy sme tí, ktorí zostali smútiť, nachádzame útechu vo vedomí, že ste obklopení láskou tety Joan, Callie, strýka Joea, strýka Paula, starej mamy, starého otca a našej širšej rodiny a priateľov, ktorí odišli ďalej.

Život strýka Jana bol dôkazom snahy o šťastie a naplnenie. Naše srdce nachádza útechu v istote, že sa opäť uvidíme.

Odpočívaj v pokoji, drahý strýko Jan. Kým sa znova nestretne, láska našej rodiny k tebe bude trvať navždy.

In Remembrance of
my Uncle Jan and
my Aunt Joan



In loving memory
of Jan Skrkon
who passed away
January 28, 2025
and Joan Mary

Skrkon, who passed away on March 23, 2023. May you dance together in heaven forever. Always in our hearts, we love and miss you more than words can say, your loving family.

S láskou na pamiatku Jan Skrkon, ktorý zomrel 28. januára 2025 a Joan Mary Skrkon, ktorá zomrela 23. marca 2023. Nech spolu navždy tancujete v nebi. Vždy v našich srdciach ťa milujeme a chýbaš nám viac ako slová môžu povedať, tvoja milujúca rodina.



ANNOUNCING

Jednota Branch 746 Scholarship

- ✓ Are you a member of Branch 746 with a paid-up life insurance premium of \$5,000 or more?
- ✓ Are you currently accepted and/or enrolled in full-time college, another post-secondary educational institution, or vocational institution?
- ✓ Are you active in Branch 746 or want to become active?

**If you answered YES to the above,
you may be eligible for a
\$1,500 scholarship!**

For guidelines on how to apply go to:
fcsu.com/membership-benefits/scholarships/
Email JednotaBranch746@gmail.com for more information.

Deadline to Apply: April 30th

Branch 670

2025 Scholarship Program

Three \$1000 Scholarships Available

Branch 670 of Donora, PA is excited to announce that it is accepting applications for its 2025 Scholarship Program. The committee will award, to the candidates who best satisfy the criteria, up to three one-time \$1000 scholarships. Any individual of Branch 670 that has had a policy for at least 4 years, is current in their premiums, is a high school senior and will attend ANY post education institution is eligible to apply.

For applications, you may email your request or send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to:
Joe Matinko, 85 Crestline Ave., Charleroi, PA 15022
matinko305@comcast.net

**ALL APPLICATION
REQUESTS
MUST BE
RECEIVED BY
APRIL 30, 2025**



Open to the Public
SLOVAK J CLUB



APRIL

- Apr. 11 Fish Fry – 4:30-7:00pm
*RSVP REQUIRED for Cod Dinner
- Apr. 16 Pork Chop Dinner – 4:30-6:30pm
Call early to reserve your spot to enjoy this popular dinner!!
- Apr. 18 LAST Fish Fry – 4:30-7:00pm
*RSVP REQUIRED for Cod Dinner
- Apr. 25 Food Open House for Early Arrival Tournament Bowlers; homemade pizza & other hors d'oeuvres
- Apr. 27 Breakfast Buffet - 9:00-11:45am

MAY

- May 7 Spaghetti Dinner – 4:30-7:00pm
- May 21 Swiss Steak Dinner – 4:30-6:30pm
*RSVP REQUIRED

SAVE THE DATES

- June 22 St. John the Baptist Parish and Slovak J Club - 2nd Annual Summer Cash Sweepstakes
- June 28 Karaoke Night
Crooning begins at 7pm
- July 26 Annual Kielbasa Open
Mayfair Country Club
8am Shot Gun Start

***Call 330-786-9972 to RSVP**

485 MORGAN AVE • AKRON, OH



**FRATERNALISM
IN ACTION**
GIVING BACK

Fraternalism is based on the idea that people have a responsibility to help each other. The FCSU Financial has a passion for helping our members help others. We encourage our branches and districts to find community projects that will enhance the lives of those who are less fortunate. Our Catholic faith tells us “do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased”. The FCSU extends our deep gratitude to the following branches and districts who worked together in generosity and kindness to make a difference. The FCSU will donate \$250.00 to each of these remarkable charities.

Branch 853 Donates to the Washington Area Humane Society

Pennsylvania Branch 853 members participated in the Fraternalism in Action program by donating items to the Washington Area Humane Society in Eighty Four, PA. This animal shelter is a no-kill shelter helping dogs, cats, bunnies and other animals find their forever home. Items donated included cat food, catnip treats, soft bedding, paper products and cleaning supplies. Thank you also to FCSU Financial Home Office for donating a \$250 check to help those without a voice. Thank you Branch 853 for organizing such an important and vital collection.



District 4 and Branch 746 Donate to St. John the Apostle Food Pantry

In the first photo, Emilia Filak, Vice President of District 4 and Supreme Court member, dropped off donations to the St. John the Apostle Food Pantry in Clark, NJ. The bags of donations of non-perishable foods were collected at the Msgr. John E Rura District 4 meeting and the Branch 746 meeting. Thank you to all members from Branches 132, 290 and 746 for their generosity!



We would love to see YOUR branch and district featured here! It's easy to do.

By sharing your Fraternalism in Action event on this page you help give other branches and districts ideas of how they, too, can contribute to the idea of helping others through fraternalism. Contact the Home Office at branch@fcsu.com or district@fcsu.com for eligibility forms and guidelines.



Pysanky Egg Dying Event

Submitted by Monica Boone

Members from Pittsburgh, PA, Branch 853 participated in the traditional Pysanky Egg Dying Event on March 8, 2025 at the South Park Library in South Park, PA. The library lent its space so that the St. Peter and Paul Ukrainian Orthodox Greek Catholic Church in Carnegie, PA, could share its tradition. Three members of Branch 853, Monica Boone, Charles Boone and Susan Painter, participated in the event where they learned the way to decorate the eggs with traditional bees wax and dyes.



Stay Connected with Us! Update Your Contact Information Today

As a valued member of FCSU Financial, it's important to keep your contact information up-to-date. This ensures you receive the latest updates on your policies, as well as news about our fraternal activities and benefits.

LET US KNOW IF YOU'VE HAD ANY CHANGES TO YOUR:

- Address • Phone Number • Email Address**
- Marital Status • Death of a Loved One**



Your Privacy Matters

We want to assure you that your personal information is used solely for maintaining accurate records and serving your needs. We do not sell or share your information with third parties.

Keeping your records current helps us serve you better. Updating your information is quick and easy—just contact us at 800.533.6682 ext 125, email juliec@fcsu.com or visit our website at www.fcsu.com. Thank you for helping us stay connected and continue supporting you and your family!

Get Ready to Tee Off at the 2025 FCSU International Golf Tournament



July 18-20, 2025

One Lakeview Drive • Morgantown, WV • 304-594-1111

Join the FCSU for an exciting 2-day tournament, exclusively for our members and their guests. We will play the championship Lakeview Golf Course along picturesque Cheat Lake, on both Saturday and Sunday. Shotgun starts are scheduled for 8:00am each day.

We hope you will enjoy the convenience of the all-inclusive Lakeview Golf Resort. Once you arrive, your accommodations, golfing and dining are just steps away.

This year, **GOLFING** will be booked through the FCSU, using the official entry form. **LODGING** will be booked directly with Lakeview Golf Resort, either online at Lakeviewresort.com or by phone at 304-594-1111. The Group Code is **FCSUGolf**. Reservations are open now.

The competition will include A, B, C, D-Callaway, S-Seniors' and W- Women's Flights. Cash prizes will be awarded in all flights meeting the minimum number of participants.

Handicaps will be determined in one of three ways:

1. Your verifiable USGA handicap
2. Your combined scores from the 2023 Joint Fraternal Golf Tournament and the 2024 FCSU International Golf Tournament
3. If neither of the above scenarios apply, your handicap will be determined by the modified Callaway System

- ▶ Optional side contests including closest to the pin, longest putt, and hole-in-one, will add to the friendly competition.
- ▶ Practice rounds are available on Friday at a reduced rate. Please contact the golf pro directly at the Lakeview Course at 304-594-2011 to schedule a tee time and to make payment.
- ▶ One guest per FCSU member*. If a guest participated in the 2024 Tournament, they must become a member to golf with us again in 2025.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS:

- | | | |
|----------------|--------------------------------|---|
| 7.18.25 | ● Practice Rounds if desired | ● Welcome Barbecue Buffet 7:00pm |
| 7.19.25 | ● Breakfast Buffet 6:00-7:30am | ● Tournament Kickoff 7:45am |
| | ● Round #1 - 8:00am | ● Mass 4:00pm |
| | ● Cocktails 5:00pm | ● Tournament Dinner Buffet & Raffles 6:00pm |
| 7.20.25 | ● Breakfast Buffet 6:00-7:30am | ● Round #2 - 8:00am |

ENTRY DEADLINE: June 1, 2025

**We strongly encourage you to make your room reservations now
Room types are available on a first received basis.**



**One guest per member, as space allows*

Please Note Our Guest Policy:

- Individuals may participate in only one FCSU golf tournament as a guest.
- If a non-member participated in the 2024 Golf Tournament, they cannot golf as a non-member guest in 2025.
- We invite all to consider opening at \$5,000 life insurance policy or a \$500 annuity to enjoy all the fraternal benefits FCSU has to offer.
- Member benefits at the golf tournament include free meals, and the opportunity to win thousands of dollars in prizes, raffle gifts and door prizes.
- To become a member, please contact FCSU a minimum of 30 days prior to the tournament.
- Call 800.533.6682, ext. 826 for Life Insurance or ext. 802 for Annuities.

2025 FCSU International Golf Tournament OFFICIAL ENTRY FORM

Each FCSU member participating in the tournament may invite one non-member golfer*

Entry Deadline: June 1, 2025
Entry Forms Are Also Available www.FCSU.com/events

SELECT YOUR GOLF PACKAGE

Package includes: Two rounds on the Lakeview Golf Course, golf cart rental, and prize pool contribution.

- FCSU MEMBER GOLFER.....Golf and Prize Package ...\$150.00 per person \$ _____
- NON-MEMBER GOLFER.....Golf and Prize Package ...\$175.00 per person \$ _____

List your twosome or foursome here:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

SELECT YOUR MEALS

FCSU MEMBER GOLFER

Meals are compliments of the FCSU

- Friday Welcome Buffet..... 7:00 – 9:00pm
(includes two drink tickets)
- Saturday Breakfast Buffet 6:00 – 7:30am
- Saturday Dinner Buffet6:00 – 9:00pm
(includes two drink tickets)
- Sunday Breakfast Buffet 6:00 – 7:30am

SELECT YOUR MEALS - NON-MEMBER GOLFER

OR NON-GOLFING FCSU MEMBER *Reduced meals compliments of FCSU*

- Friday Welcome Buffet..... 7:00 – 9:00pm \$30 per person \$ _____
- Friday Beer & Wine Bar (2 drink tickets) \$10 per person \$ _____
- Saturday Breakfast Buffet 6:00 – 7:30am \$15 per person \$ _____
- Saturday Dinner Buffet 6:00 – 9:00pm \$35 per person \$ _____
- Saturday Cocktails (2 drink tickets) \$10 per person \$ _____
- Sunday Breakfast Buffet 6:00 – 7:30am \$15 per person \$ _____

TOTAL: \$ _____

PLEASE MAKE YOUR ROOM RESERVATIONS EARLY

Book your accommodations directly with Lakeview Golf Resort • Visit Lakeviewresort.com or call 304.594.1111
Group Code: FCSUGOLF • King Room - \$119 per night or Double Room - \$109 per night, plus tax, as available

Personal Information

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

PHONE: _____ EMAIL: _____

FCSU MEMBER? YES NO FCSU BRANCH #: _____ LAST 4 DIGITS SS#: _____

IF NO, FCSU MEMBER SPONSOR & BRANCH #: _____

AGE: _____ Senior Flight Women's Flight USGA Handicap: _____ GHIN: _____ (include verification)

I have participated in the 2023 Joint Fraternal and 2024 FCSU Golf Tournaments

METHOD OF PAYMENT: Check enclosed payable to FCSU **TOTAL ENCLOSED \$** _____ (Golf + Meals)
 Credit Card payments may be made by phone. Call 800.533.6682, ext. 122.

PHOTO RELEASE:
Your participation in this event serves as permission for us to use your image in our Jednota newspaper and on our website.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Mail entry and payment to by June 1, 2025 to:

Joanne Fibbi, FCSU Golf Tournament, 1741 Hempstead Lane, Pittsburgh, PA 15241.

Payment must accompany entry form. Make check payable to FCSU (with Golfing on the memo line).

QUESTIONS? Contact Joanne Fibbi at jfibbi@fcsu.com, call 412-953-4721, or email events@fcsu.com

Srdcovka's US Debut: A Slovak Celebration in Linden, NJ!

*Submitted by Sabina Sabados,
FCSU Region 1 Director*

On Sunday afternoon, February 23, 2025, the Slovak American Church - Holy Family in Linden, NJ, was alive with the sounds of Slovakia, thanks to the energetic Srdcovka band! This talented group, on their first-ever American tour, kicked off their US debut at The Slovak Ball, organized by the Slovak-American Cultural Center, before making their way to the NCSML in Cedar Rapids and a final performance at Msgr. Komar Hall in Linden stole the show!

The church hall was buzzing with excitement as the crowd was captivated by Srdcovka's lively tunes. The mix of foot-tapping songs and spirited dancing created an electric atmosphere. Guests were treated to delicious Slovak gulas and traditional sweets! Branch 746 Jednota members spearheaded the organization of this dynamic event under the leadership of Fr. Tadeusz Mierzwa, Anna Janitor, and Alena Donicova the newest members of the Branch. The event brought together nearly 150 guests and it also served as a fundraiser for the church. In attendance were members of FCSU Jednota Branch 746 (Linden) and 45 (NYC).

The bar, generously supplied by Wesmont Liquors G4, featured an assortment of Slovak spirits like Slivovica, Goral Vodka, Nestville Whisky, and a variety of Nestville Beers, adding a special touch. It was an afternoon full of fun, culture, and community spirit—a perfect way to end Srdcovka's tour and celebrate Slovak traditions in the heart of New Jersey!

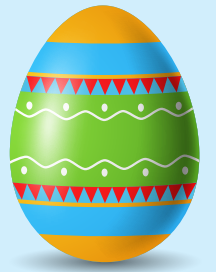


FCSU Search-A-Word

A M N O I T C E R R U S E R O
 S I T R E R W A T Y U I B P I
 E R Y F G H D S W E H U V C U
 D A N V E A W T T R J H H I Y
 A C E X R I E E Y T I U C U T
 F L S F T C R R H Y R D R L R
 F E E H Y J F F G C P S E K E
 H J I J U A I O H I O A W J W
 F V R K Z V B B Y U I E K G S
 R T K Y I B N T J K L T I C R
 S X Z R R T Y U I J H G S X E
 C V V N K D F G H L F H O E Y
 S A C R I F I C E O D J K T A
 O I U S U T S I R K W O Q H R
 I J H S D G B V H U O P M F P

APRIL Word List

- RESURRECTION KOŠÍK (Basket)
- EASTER KRÍŽ (Cross)
- CHURCH KRISTUS (Christ)
- MIRACLE VZKRIESENÝ (Risen)
- SACRIFICE MODLITBA (Prayer)
- PRAYER VAJCIA (Eggs)



Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

Email: _____

Branch #: _____ Phone: _____

Search-A-Word Rules

Five monthly winners will receive \$50!

All FCSU members are eligible to enter. One entry per member! Complete the puzzle and email it along with your name, address, email and branch number to contest@fcsu.com. Or mail puzzle and form to:

FCSU PUZZLE

6611 Rockside Road • Independence, OH 44131

Entries must be received by May 29, 2025.
 Five winners will be drawn from all correct entries.

February Puzzle Winners

Brenda L Kopusko (Branch 670)

Steve A Krajnak (Branch 24)

Susan Moynihan (Branch 24)

Thomas M. Surendonk (Branch 926)

Josephine Valcho (Branch 628)

Congratulations and Keep Puzzling!

FRANtastic Cuisine

BY FRAN STREKAL



PASKA BREAD-SLOVAK EASTER BREAD

- | | |
|----------------------------|----------------------|
| For Bread | Egg wash for the top |
| 5 cups all-purpose flour | 1 large egg |
| 1 packet instant dry yeast | 1 Tbsp water |
| ¼ cup granulated sugar | 1 Tbsp sugar |
| 2 ½ tsp salt | (whisk together) |
| 1 cup of lukewarm water | |
| ½ cup whole milk | |
| 2 large eggs | |
| ¼ cup of softened butter | |

Using a stand mixer or wooden spoon, add the lukewarm water, yeast, and sugar, mix until dissolved.

Add the remaining bread ingredients and mix until it comes together to form a smooth ball of dough.

Place the dough in a greased bowl (I use butter), cover with a damp towel and place it on the counter or in the oven with only the oven light on. Allow the dough to rise for 60-90 minutes or until it has doubled in size.

While the dough is rising, grease a 9-inch round pan and set aside.

Turn the dough out onto a lightly floured surface. Cut off about a ¼ of the dough to make your braided cross. Shape the remaining large piece of dough and form it into a smooth ball, place it into the center of the greased pan.

Now make your braided cross and place it on top of your dough ball in the pan, cover with the damp towel and allow it to rise for 45 minutes. It should almost double in size during that time. While the bread is rising, preheat your oven to 350 degrees.

Whisk together your egg wash ingredients and gently brush the mixture over the loaf. Bake the bread for 35-45 minutes until golden brown. Cool and enjoy!

Branch 181 Youth Member Scholastic Assistance

\$500 Scholarships



Applications must be postmarked by May 31, 2025

For the Fall 2025 start of the academic year, the St. John the Baptist Society – Branch 181 of United, PA, will be offering \$500.00 scholarships to eligible high school senior members planning to attend college or career/technical school. These will be one-time scholarships selected by an independent panel that will evaluate each application. The number of scholarships awarded is dependent on the number of eligible applicants.

- You are a member in good Standing of the First Catholic Slovak Union, St. John the Baptist Society – Branch 181.
- You have been a member of Branch 181 for 4 years prior to applying with a minimum \$5000 insurance policy.
- You are a high school senior preparing to graduate in 2025 and have applied for the 2025 Fall term at a qualifying Educational institution.

**Contact Vicki at 724-433-8469 or
vicki15@zoominternet.net for an application**

These scholarships are solely funded by your local Branch 181 and are independent of the First Catholic Slovak Union Home Office.

News from Slovakia - Správy zo Slovenska

Pellegrini calls for unity in the interest of common values in the Vatican

In the jubilee year, the holy doors were open in Rome to pilgrims from Slovakia.

Rome/Bratislava, April 3 (TASR) - Thousands of Slovaks came to the national pilgrimage to Rome and the Vatican, uniting regardless of age or opinions and showing that values and faith can unite. That is the message that could be leaving Rome for Slovakia during these days, said Slovak President Peter Pellegrini on Thursday after a mass in the Basilica of St. John Lateran.

The delegation of the Slovak President arrived to visit the Holy See on the occasion of the national pilgrimage, which took place from April 3 to 6 as part of the jubilee year 2025.

In the jubilee year, the holy doors are open in Rome and the next few days belong to pilgrims from Slovakia. A solemn Slovak liturgy was held in the Lateran Basilica, which is the cathedral of Rome, celebrated by the Bishop of Nitra and Vice-Chairman of the Conference of Bishops of Slovakia, Mons. Viliam Judák.

“As I promised during the Holy Father’s visit in December, I came to Rome together with Slovak pilgrims, of whom there are thousands these days. And I am very happy that we were able to start the national pilgrimage today with a Holy Mass in this most important basilica of the Catholic Church led by the Bishop of Nitra,” said Pellegrini. Together with the pilgrims, he also passed through the Holy Door. These doors are opened in the main Roman basilicas only in jubilee years, or on other special occasions, and under certain conditions, the church grants indulgences when passing through them.

At Friday’s festive Slovak liturgy, according to the President of the Slovak Republic, Pope Francis, whose health does not allow him to receive them personally in an audience, will also greet the Slovak pilgrims indirectly, and his message will also be read.

Pellegrini vo Vatikáne vyzval na jednotu v záujme spoločných hodnôt

V jubilejnom roku sú v Ríme otvorené sväté brány a najbližšie dni patria pútnikom zo Slovenska.

Rím/Bratislava 3. apríla (TASR) - Na národnú púť do Ríma a Vatikánu prišli tisíce Slovienek a Slovákov, ktorí sa spojili bez ohľadu na vek či názory a ukazujú, že na hodnotách aj na viere sa dá spojiť. To je posolstvo, ktoré by mohlo počas týchto dní odchádzať z Ríma na Slovensko, uviedol vo štvrtok prezident SR Peter Pellegrini po omši v Bazilike svätého Jána v Lateráne.

Delegácia prezidenta SR pricestovala na návštevu Svätej stolice pri príležitosti národnej púte, ktorá sa koná od 3. do 6. apríla v rámci jubilejného roka 2025.

V jubilejnom roku sú v Ríme otvorené sväté brány a najbližšie dni patria pútnikom zo Slovenska. V lateránskej bazilike, ktorá je katedrálou Ríma, sa vo štvrtok konala slávnostná slovenská liturgia, ktorú celebroval nitriansky biskup a podpredseda Konferencie biskupov Slovenska Mons. Viliam Judák.

“Tak ako som sľúbil počas decembrovej návštevy Svätého Otca, prišiel som do Ríma spolu so slovenskými pútnikmi, ktorých sú tu tieto dni tisíce. A som veľmi rád, že sme v tejto najdôležitejšej bazilike katolíckej cirkvi mohli dnes odštartovať národnú púť svätou omšou pod vedením nitrianskeho biskupa,” povedal Pellegrini. Spolu s pútnikmi tiež prešiel svätou bránou. Tieto brány sa otvárajú v hlavných rímskych bazilikách iba v jubilejných rokoch, prípadne pri iných osobitných príležitostiach a za stanovených podmienok pri ich prechode cirkev udeľuje odpustky.

Na piatkovej slávnostnej slovenskej liturgii podľa slov prezidenta SR pozdraví slovenských pútnikov sprostredkovane aj pápež František, ktorého zdravotný stav mu neumožňuje prijať ich osobne na audiencii, a bude prečítaný aj jeho posolstvo.

They created a 400-meter chain of over 8,000 blown-up eggs

14 primary and kindergarten schools, mostly from Humenné, and two kindergartens from municipalities in the district participated.

Humenné, April 3 (TASR) - On Thursday, students connected over 8,000 blown-out eggs into a chain in the square in Humenné with the aim of creating a Slovak record for the longest chain of eggs. As public green maintenance foreman Františka Mudra told TASR, the chain that passed through the square was 444.4 meters long.

“A month ago, we wrote a letter to all elementary and kindergarten schools to blow eggs for us. For every hundred blown eggs, we promised to plant one tree. The original species, that is, a linden, cherry or maple - whatever they choose, in the premises of their kindergarten or elementary school,” Mudra said, adding that they did not expect such a response.

The event was attended by 14 primary and kindergarten schools, mostly from Humenné, and two kindergartens from municipalities in the district. “We wanted to show children traditional ways of blowing out an egg and how to decorate it ecologically, so that we don’t buy unnecessary plastic and use what we have at home and what we use,” explained Mudra.

All the blown eggs will be used for this year’s Easter decorations in the city. “We try to ensure that our decorations are recycled in the long term, whether for Easter or Christmas,” concluded Mudra.

Vytvorili 400-metrovú reťaz z vyše 8000 vyfúknutých vajíčok

Do akcie sa zapojilo 14 základných a materských škôl, prevažne z Humenného, a dve materské školy obcí v okrese.

Humenné 3. apríla (TASR) - Vo štvrtok na námestí v Humennom spojili žiaci vyše 8000 vyfúknutých vajíčok do reťaze s cieľom vytvoriť slovenský rekord v najdlhšej reťazi z vajíčok. Ako pre TASR uviedla majsterka údržby verejnej zelene Františka Mudra, reťaz, ktorá prechádzala námestím, mala dĺžku 444,4 metra.

„Pred mesiacom sme napísali list všetkým základným a materským školám, aby nám vyfúkali vajíčka. Za každých sto vyfúkaných vajíčok sme prisľúbili výsadbu jedného stromu. Pôvodný druh, to znamená lipu, čerešňu alebo javor - čo si vyberú, v areáli svojej materskej alebo základnej školy,” uviedla Mudra s tým, že takúto odozvu nečakali.

Do akcie sa zapojilo 14 základných a materských škôl, prevažne z Humenného, a dve materské školy obcí v okrese. „Chceli sme deťom ukázať tradičné možnosti, ako si vyfúkať vajíčko a ako si ho ozdobiť ekologicky, aby sme nekupovali zbytočne plastové a využili to, čo máme doma a čo používame,” vysvetlila Mudra.

Všetky vyfúknuté vajíčka budú použité na tohtoročnú veľkonočnú výzdobu mesta. „Snažíme sa, aby naša výzdoba bola dlhodobo recyklovaná, či už veľkonočná, alebo vianočná,” uzavrela Mudra.

The agency wants to build a rain garden for 168,421 euros

In the event of extreme drought, the retained water will be used to irrigate surrounding areas, he says.

Bratislava, April 1 (TASR) - The Slovak Environmental Agency (SAŽP) wants to better manage rainwater. It has therefore announced a tender for the construction of a rain garden. The estimated value of the contract is 168,421 euros. This follows from the announcement published in the gazette of the Public Procurement Office (ÚVO).

The subject of the contract is construction work on a multifunctional structure, which consists of three main parts, namely a rain garden, a pond and an accumulation tank. “This complexity will ensure flexibility in managing rainwater collected from part of the Slovak Environmental Agency building during extreme weather events caused by climate change,” the agency explained.

According to the SAŽP, in the event of rain, the structure will first collect water into a pond, from where it will overflow into the rain garden, where it will naturally seep in and at the same time fill underground accumulation tanks from the pond. In the event of extreme drought, the retained water will be used to irrigate surrounding areas, it says. “The structure will retain rainwater from an area of 1,027 square meters and the expected amount of water retained per year is estimated at 904 cubic meters,” the environment agency said.

Vytvorili 400-metrovú reťaz z vyše 8000 vyfúknutých vajíčok

Do akcie sa zapojilo 14 základných a materských škôl, prevažne z Humenného, a dve materské školy obcí v okrese.

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Do akcie sa zapojilo 14 základných a materských škôl, prevažne z Humenného, a dve materské školy obcí v okrese. „Chceli sme deťom ukázať tradičné možnosti, ako si vyfúkať vajíčko a ako si ho ozdobiť ekologicky, aby sme nekupovali zbytočne plastové a využili to, čo máme doma a čo používame,” vysvetlila Mudra.

Všetky vyfúknuté vajíčka budú použité na tohtoročnú veľkonočnú výzdobu mesta. „Snažíme sa, aby naša výzdoba bola dlhodobo recyklovaná, či už veľkonočná, alebo vianočná,” uzavrela Mudra.



District 4 and Branch 746 Host Their First Annual Meetings in New Jersey!

Submitted by Sabina Sabados, FCSU Region 1 Director



On Sunday, March 30, 2025, Branch 746 held its first annual meeting of the year at Holy Family Church in Linden, NJ, where 30 new members were warmly welcomed. The meeting focused on upcoming fraternal activities, including a trip to the Sight and Sound Theatre in Lancaster to see Noah, pilgrimages to the National Shrine of The Divine Mercy in Massachusetts, the Marian Shrine in Stony Point, and the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C. The group also discussed plans for the annual Region 1 summer picnic.

After Branch 746's meeting, District 4 of the Msgr. Rura District of New Jersey held its bi-annual meeting. The meeting was an opportunity for members from Branches 132, 290, and 746 to unite, enjoy delicious homemade Slovak food, and engage in lively discussions.

One of the key topics was the upcoming second annual Somerset Patriots baseball game scheduled for Sunday, July 13th. All District 4 members are invited free of charge, with more details under District announcements. It was also decided to organize a

pumpkin-picking event for the fall and to offer masses for Jednota members. Additionally, Region 1 Director Sabina Sabados provided an update on developments at the Home Office including the launch of the new website, a financial update, and upcoming national fraternal events.

Thank you to all members that brought non-perishable donations to the St. John the Apostle Food Pantry.

We also celebrated special birthdays for members of Branch 746 (Danka Mikulasko, Kristina Draculin, Maria Halama) and Branch 290 (Lilian Minarovich). Best wishes for health, happiness, and God's blessings to all those that celebrate their birthdays in March!

Overall, the day was a wonderful opportunity not only to discuss Jednota business but also to connect with fellow Slovaks from the community. Fr. Tadeusz Mierzwa encouraged members to attend Mass on Fridays (in Slovak) as well as Stations of the Cross while Fr. Peter Bujdos ended the day with a prayer and reminded members of the Lenten season - a time for reflection, penance, and the renewal of faith.

On behalf of all the members of District 4, as Easter approaches, may the resurrection of Christ bring you strength, hope, and eternal joy. Šťastnú a požehnanú Veľkú noc, nech vás naplní Božia láska a pokoj.



**THE TAMBURITZANS PRESENT :
LEGACY**

Sunday, April 27, 2025 @ 3pm
6001 Archwood Road • Independence, OH

Chewy's Corner

Spring is finally here, and I couldn't be more excited! The days are getting longer, the weather is warming up, and the flowers are starting to bloom (kvitnúť). It's like the whole world is waking up from a long, cozy nap (spánok), and everything looks bright and new. The trees are turning green, and the air feels fresh!

Easter (Veľká noc) is just around the corner! I love Easter egg hunts with colorful eggs hidden all around. I hope you find lots of them, and that they are filled with surprises (prekvapenia)! The surprise at our house is in the summer when Dad finds one last egg while cutting the grass (tráva)! Easter is also a time to enjoy sweet treats, like chocolate bunnies and jelly beans, and spend time with the people you love. It's such a fun, happy time of year.

We are in the final stretches of the school year. It's easy to get distracted, but stay focused (zameraný). The end is near. Looking forward to talking to you next month! Your friend, Chewy.

Minutes Of The Quarterly Meeting Of The Board Of Directors December 14, 2024 • Virtual Meeting

OPEN MEETING:

President Kenneth Arendt called the meeting to order at 8:00am and asked Vice President Damian Nasta, to offer the opening prayer.

ROLL CALL:

Kevin Collins, Executive Secretary, read the roll call with the following members present:

Rev. Thomas Nasta ... National ChaplainPresent
Kenneth A. Arendt National President.....Present
Damian Nasta National Vice President..Present
Kevin Collins Executive Secretary.....Present
John Tokarsky..... National TreasurerPresent
Gregory Maurer Chairman of Auditors.....Present
Joanne Fibbi Fraternal Activities
Director.....Present
Sabina Sabados..... Region 1 DirectorPresent
Nicole Nasta Region 2 DirectorPresent
Martha Zavada..... Region 3 DirectorPresent
James Marmol Region 4 DirectorPresent
Bradley Matta Region 5 DirectorPresent
Thomas Ivanec Region 6 DirectorPresent
Timothy Graves..... Region 7 Director.....Present
Milos Mitro..... Region 8 DirectorPresent
Gary J. Matta General Counsel.....Present

READING OF THE CALL:

The Executive Secretary then read the Call to the Quarterly Meeting of the Board of Directors of the First Catholic Slovak Union.

PRESENTATION OF THE AGENDA:

President Arendt presented the agenda for the Quarterly Meeting and asked for its acceptance. A motion was made by Timothy Graves and seconded by Gregory Maurer to accept the agenda and to allow the President to change the order of the agenda, if necessary, as he presents each item on the agenda with appropriate comments or recommendations. Motion carried.

ACCEPTANCE OF THE MINUTES OF THE QUARTERLY BOARD MEETING SEPTEMBER 14, 2024:

A motion was made by Bradley Matta and seconded by James Marmol to accept the minutes of the Quarterly Board of Directors Meeting held September 14, 2024, as presented. Motion carried.

DIRECTOR OF FRATERNAL ACTIVITIES REPORT:

Director of Fraternal Activities Joanne Fibbi led a review of the 2024 FCSU Losers Pool, Family Fall Festival, Day of Giving Sock Drive, Pumpkin Carving Contest, and Coloring Contest.

The Director of Fraternal Activities stated that the National Bowling Tournament is scheduled for April 2025 in Kent, Ohio. There will be two National Picnics, June 21, 2025 at Knoebels Amusement Resort and June 28, 2025 at Wiegand Lake Park. The Fall Family Fest is to be determined. All details will be published in the Jednota and posted on our website when available.

AQS MANAGEMENT, INC.:

Larry White, representing AQS Asset Management, presented an extensive Investment Portfolio Transaction Report to the Board of Directors by video conference. Each member of the Board of Directors received a copy of the presentation in advance for his or her review. Mr. White also led a review of the current annuity rates. During and after the presentation, Mr. White answered questions from the Board.

FINANCIAL REPORT FOR 2024:

The President presented the financial summary report for the third quarter of 2024 and answered the Board's questions. He stated that he has been in contact with

our actuary regarding the calculation of the reserve figures and is asking for clarification.

Federal Home Loan Bank of Cincinnati

The President and the Executive Secretary submitted a written report to the Board of Directors giving a complete update of the investments and all current transactions with the Federal Home Loan Bank of Cincinnati.

Portfolio Custodian

The Executive Secretary updated the Board of Directors on the report from our portfolio custodian, Key Bank. Everything was found in order, and he answered the Board's questions.

Investment Updates

The President, Executive Secretary and Treasurer led a review on the investments and transactions with the UBS Fund, MAI Fund, and the Clutterbuck Fund.

Following the reports, the President and the Executive Secretary answered the Board's questions.

TREASURERS REPORT:

Treasurer John Tokarsky presented a detailed update on the investments for the first three quarters of 2024 and answered the Board's questions. Each member of the Board received a copy of the presentation in advance for his or her review.

PRESENTATION OF THE COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Executive Committee

The Executive Secretary gave a report on the Executive Committee Meetings. He stated that in accordance with the Bylaws of the First Catholic Slovak Union, the Executive Committee meets monthly and whenever else it is necessary to take care of the business of the Society.

Investments

Investments were made in accordance with the laws of the State of Ohio and with the investment policy adopted by the Board of Directors. All investments are approved by a vote of at least three members of the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee members work very closely with the Society's Investment Advisor, AQS Asset Management.

Scholarship Committee

The Executive Secretary gave a report on the Scholarship Committee, which is comprised of three independent professionals led by Father Gerard Gonda, OSB.

PROPOSED BUDGET 2025:

The President presented the proposed budget for 2025 and answered the Board's questions. A motion was made by James Marmol and seconded by Nicole Nasta to accept the budget as presented. Motion carried.

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY'S REPORT:

The Executive Secretary stated that we continue to advertise on the local Fox 8 TV station in Cleveland and he hopes to expand advertising to Philadelphia, Johnstown and Greensburg in the near future. He has been tracking the sales and running production reports on product inquiries and types of products sold.

WEBSITE/REBRANDING:

The President stated we have almost completed our rebranding of the website, newspaper and newsletter.

We have expanded our licensing to the following states, Alaska, Arkansas, Delaware, Idaho, Kansas, Maine, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Utah and Vermont. We are still waiting on approval from Oklahoma. We are now licensed in 37 states. All of our forms and policies have been submitted to the new states for approval. Once we receive approval, we will run a marketing campaign to recruit independent agents.

CYBERSECURITY:

The Executive Secretary stated we are currently being audited by the State of Ohio. This audit happens every five years. They are doing an extensive review of our IT system and cybersecurity. We were required to hire an outside firm to review our cybersecurity. We are taking every precaution to secure our information and ensure that we meet all the requirements for the audit.

AUDIT REPORT:

Chairman of Auditors Gregory Mauer gave a review of the 2024 audits. He stated that the audit team found everything in order. A copy of his reports was sent to the state for review.

CONVENTION UPDATE:

The President stated that after review he has narrowed the possible convention site to 3 locations: Embassy Suites by Hilton in Greenville, South Carolina, Hilton Greenville in South Carolina, and Embassy Suites by Hilton Charleston Airport Convention Center in North Charleston, South Carolina. The President plans to make site visits very soon.

A motion was made by James Marmol and seconded by Thomas Ivanec for the President to choose the location for the 2026 Convention after making site visits and to review the hotel contract with General Counsel Gary Matta before it is signed. Motion carried.

DONATIONS:

All donations were reviewed and acted upon.

PAYMENT OF BILLS ASSOCIATED WITH THE QUARTERLY BOARD MEETING:

A motion was made by Timothy Graves and seconded by Damian Nasta to pay all the bills associated with the meeting. Motion carried.

MISCELLANEOUS:

The President stated that the September 2025 Board meeting will be held in Washington, DC in conjunction with the 60th Anniversary of the dedication of the Our Mother of Sorrows Chapel in the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception.

ADJOURN:

There being no further business to conduct, a motion was made by Thomas Ivanec and seconded by Martha Zavada to adjourn. Motion carried.

Reverend Thomas Nasta closed the meeting with prayer.

Kenneth A. Arendt
President, CEO

Kevin J. Collins
Executive Secretary, COO

What did one bunny say to the other?

You're ear-resistable.

Why did the jelly bean go to school?

It wanted to be a Smartie.

**KARAOKE
NIGHT**
330-786-9972



SATURDAY, JUNE 28

\$15 per person

Food Provided @ 6:30pm

Crooning from 7:00-11:00pm

SLOVAK J CLUB

Minutes of the Executive Committee Meeting

Friday, February 21, 2025

Home Office

OPEN MEETING:

President Kenneth Arendt opened the meeting at 9:30am and asked Damian Nasta to lead the prayer.

ROLL CALL:

Members Attending By Video Conference:

- Kenneth A. Arendt..... National President
- Damian Nasta..... National Vice President
- Kevin J. Collins Executive Secretary
- John Tokarsky Treasurer
- Bradley Matta..... Regional Director
(by invitation of the President)

ACCEPTANCE OF THE MEETING MINUTES:

The Executive Secretary presented the minutes of the January 17, 2025 Executive Committee Meeting. A motion was made by Damian Nasta and seconded by John Tokarsky to accept the minutes as presented. Motion carried.

AQS MANAGEMENT, INC.:

Larry White, representing AQS Management, Inc., presented an extensive Investment Portfolio Transaction and Review Report. Each member of the Committee received a copy of the presentation in advance for his review. Larry White also presented possible new investment opportunities. Following his presentation, he answered the Committee's questions.

TREASURERS REPORT:

Treasurer John Tokarsky presented his monthly written Treasurer's report. Following the report, he answered the Committee's questions.

ECONOMIC OVERVIEW:

Annuity Rates

The President led a discussion on the current annuity rates. The Executive Committee decided the annuity rates will remain the same and be reviewed at the March Executive Committee meeting.

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY'S REPORT:

Investment Updates

The President and the Executive Secretary submitted a written report to the Executive Committee Meeting on the investments and transactions with the Federal Home Loan Bank (FHLB), UBS, MAI Fund, and Clutterbuck Fund. The Committee discussed the report and the Executive Secretary answered the Committee's questions.

Financial Report

The President and the Executive Secretary presented a detailed summary of the Financial Report for the third quarter of 2024 and answered the Committee's questions.

Portfolio Review

The President and the Executive Secretary updated the Committee on the report from our portfolio custodian, Key Bank, found everything in order, and answered the Committee's questions. The President stated he will invite representatives from MAI, UBS and Clutterbuck to attend a future Executive Meeting to review our investment portfolios.

Mortgages and Overdue Mortgages

The President and the Executive Secretary presented the report for the month of January for the Committee's review and answered their questions. The President led a discussion regarding new mortgage investments and answered the Committee's questions.

Monthly Disbursements

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

Death Benefits & Accumulations.....	\$147,210.00
Cash Withdrawals & Accumulations.....	\$39,365.79
Matured Endowments & Accumulations	\$0.00
Trust Fund.....	\$0.00

The Executive Secretary also presented the Membership and Annuity Report.

The Committee reviewed the remainder of the disbursements and the Executive Secretary answered all questions.

The President led a review of our FHLB advances and their current rates for possible future advancements.

SALES AND MARKETING:

The President and Executive Secretary led an overview of our current and new sales program.

The Home Office is collaborating with our external marketing firm on a program to recruit independent agents in the new states we recently became licensed in: Alaska, Arkansas, Delaware, Idaho, Kansas, Maine, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Utah, and Vermont.

The Executive Secretary led a discussion regarding the TV ads running on Fox 8 and stated they will be doing a second taping. We are getting a good response. We plan to expand our advertising to Youngstown, Pittsburgh and Philadelphia.

FRATERNAL ACTIVITIES REPORT:

The Executive Secretary updated the committee on upcoming fraternal activities. The International Bowling Tournament will be held April 26-27, 2025 at Kent Lanes in Kent, Ohio. All upcoming fraternal activities will be published in the Jednota newspaper and posted on our website.

MISCELLANEOUS:

The President is finalizing on-site visits for the 2026 Convention. The contract will be reviewed by General Counsel.

REQUESTS FOR ADS AND DONATIONS:

Requests for donations and ads were reviewed and acted upon.

ADJOURN:

There being no further business to discuss, a motion was made by Damian Nasta and seconded by John Tokarsky to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried.

Damian Nasta closed the meeting with prayer.

Kenneth A. Arendt Kevin J. Collins
President, CEO Executive Secretary, COO

Home Office Contacts

800.533.6682 • fcsu@fcsu.com

LIFE INSURANCE

SUZANNE Ext. 115 suzanneb@fcsu.com
Life Insurance Department Services, Beneficiary Changes, Cash Value / Surrenders and Medical Assistance Information

FRAN..... Ext. 116 frans@fcsu.com
Claims Department, Life Insurance Claims

JULIE..... Ext. 125 juliec@fcsu.com
Life Insurance Department Services, Address Changes, Policy Payments

ANNUITY DEPARTMENT

TEREZIA Ext. 118 tereziar@fcsu.com
Annuity Department Director
Deposit Agreements / Settlement Options, RMD, Scheduled Payments and Deposits

SHERI Ext. 126 sherir@fcsu.com
Annuity/IRA Department, New Contracts, Deposits from-to Existing Policies

KELLY Ext. 127 kellys@fcsu.com
Annuity/IRA Department, New Contracts, Transfers, Withdrawals, Full Surrenders

DOROTA Ext. 129 dorotap@fcsu.com
Annuity Claims Department, Member Portal Customer Service

AGENT SUPPORT

ANDREA Ext. 112 andream@fcsu.com
Agent Coordinator, Commissions

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE

AMBER Ext. 128 amberg@fcsu.com
Accounts Payable, Life Insurance Policy Loans, Mortgages

BRANCH SUPPORT

BARBARA Ext. 122 branch@fcsu.com
district@fcsu.com

Branch and District Liaison, Announcements, Activities, Transfers, Mergers, Deposit Agreements, Fraternal Activities & Events

PAM Ext. 119 pamk@fcsu.com
Office Assistant, Branch and District Coordinator

COMMUNICATION

BEATA Ext. 114 beataf@fcsu.com
Chief Marketing Officer, Executive Assistant, FCSU Scholarships

SHANNON Ext. 123 editor@fcsu.com
Jednota Editor, Newspaper Subscription Requests and/or Changes

Crossword Puzzle Solution from Page 15

	D	E	N		H	U	R	L		T	A	C	O				
	B	E	T	A		O	R	E	O		I	D	O	L			
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A	V	E	C			P	A	V	E			N	O	N	E		
G	A	I	T			E	Y	E	D			S	U	E			

MEMBER
Spotlight

Do you have...

- A business?
- Slovak memories?
- A travel adventure?
- An interesting job or hobby?

WE WANT TO HEAR IT!
We're featuring members stories in Jednota and want to include yours!

email editor@fcsu.com



*Don't
Put All
Your Eggs
in One
Basket...*

**Open 6 Year Fixed
Annuity or IRA**

5.00%

Other Annuity Products:

8 Year **4.75%**
Flex Annuity or IRA

6 Year **4.50%**
Flex Annuity or IRA

Park 2 Annuity **4.50%**
(not available in the state of NY)

Park Free Plus **3.00%**
Annuity or IRA -
*1st year guaranteed (new Park Free Plus
max deposit \$25,000 per person)*

Settlement Options are **4.00%**
based on an interest rate of
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